

CHECKMATE

in the NORTH

W. G. CARR

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CHECKMATE IN THE NORTH

THE AXIS PLANNED TO INVADE AMERICA

By WILLIAM GUY CARR

BY GUESS AND BY GOD

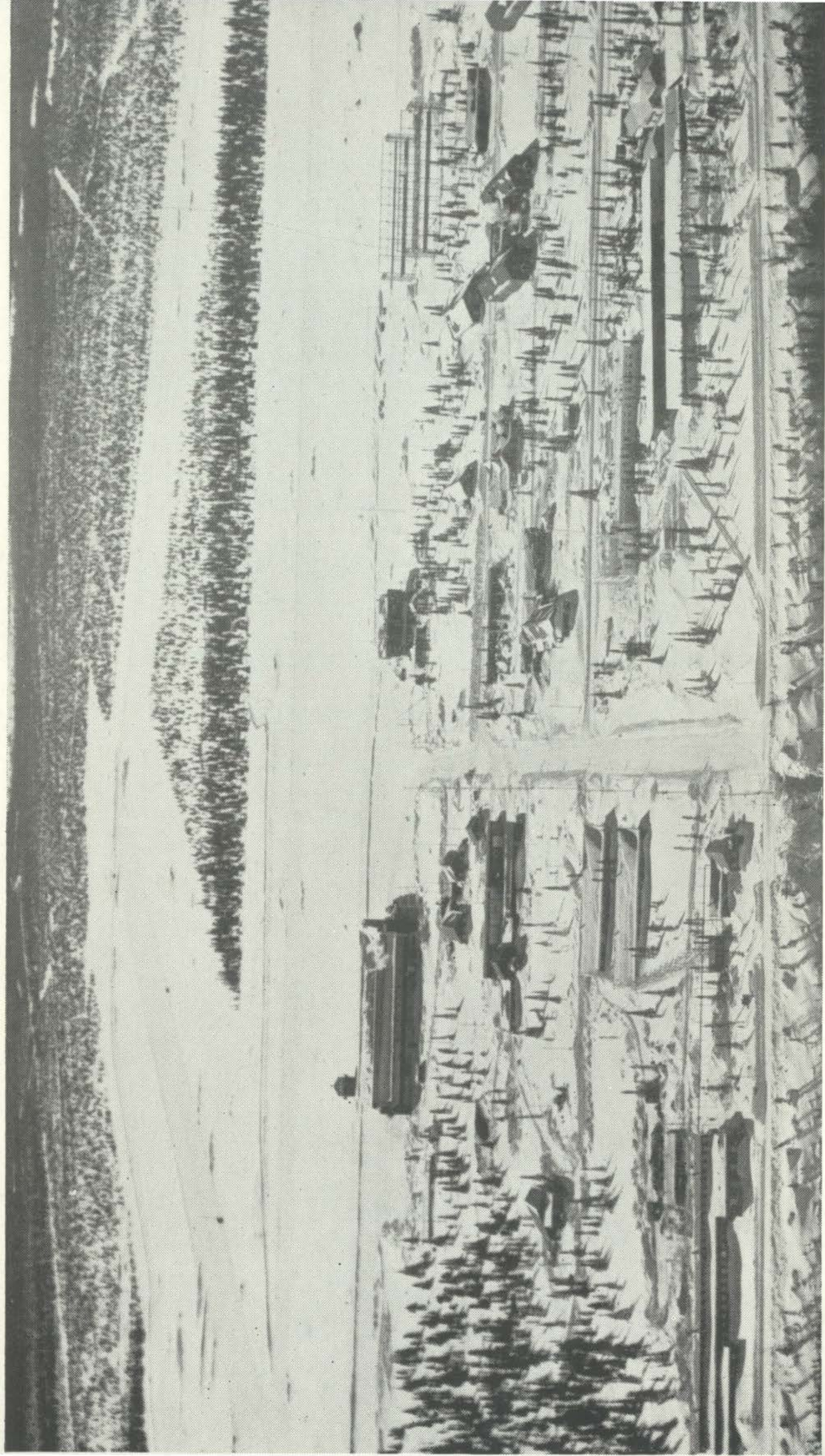
HELL'S ANGELS OF THE DEEP

HIGH AND DRY

BRASS HATS AND BELL BOTTOMED TROUSERS

GOOD HUNTING

OUT OF THE MIST



Goose Bay Airport from the Air, in Winter. R.C.A.F. Section.

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The Axis Planned to Invade America

by

WILLIAM GUY CARR

Lt.-CMDR., R.C.N.R.

TORONTO

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1944

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I DEDICATE THIS BOOK

TO

BILL DURRELL

and to the men of the construction gangs: the personnel of the Armed Forces: the officers and the men of the Mercantile Marine: the Transport and the Ferry Command pilots: the Surveyors: the Wireless Operators: and the Meteorologists with whom I served while attached to Goose Bay. They are the unsung heroes of this war. They fought the elements in the far-away places of the earth. Out of sight they were often out of mind. They tackled and overcame all difficulties and braved many dangers. They solved all problems they encountered in the northern wilderness that we might checkmate the plans of our enemies and live to enjoy the benefits of our great heritage.

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CHECKMATE IN THE NORTH
THE AXIS PLANNED TO INVADE AMERICA

CHAPTER 1

The Importance of the American Arctic in Relation to World Politics

The Nazi Plan for World Conquest—The College of Geo-political Science in Berlin—The German Fifth Column and how it is recruited and trained.

WORLD WAR II brought about a situation which made it necessary for the United Nations to occupy Iceland, Greenland, the Faroe Island, and increase the defences of Alaska, the West Indies, Newfoundland, Labrador, Baffin Land and Northern Ireland, because of the threatened invasion of the American continent by the Axis Powers.

Long before the United States of America officially declared war upon Germany, President Roosevelt undoubtedly suspected this danger. He was playing for time. The various "Deals" which took place between the U.S.A. and Great Britain prior to America's declaration of war had the public mystified. There was the "Lend-Lease Bill"; there was the "Deal" in which the United States gave fifty destroyers to Britain and Canada and in return was granted territorial rights in Newfoundland, the West Indies and the Canadian Arctic.

The United States Navy was ordered to perform what the seamen of the United Nations called "The Chastity Patrol" . . . "Don't touch me and I won't touch you" sort of thing. The President of the United States adopted the policy of using the American Navy to patrol the western half of the North Atlantic. He stated bluntly that he was determined to guard American merchant shipping against U-boat attack, come what may. He made it clear that even the sighting of an enemy craft west of the 40th meridian was to be considered a hostile act. His warships were ordered "to fire first and ask questions afterwards". They sometimes did.

In actual fact all these moves were made necessary because of the imminent threat of invasion. The United States Navy was helping the Allies patrol the vast Atlantic Ocean on the look-out for the Nazi invasion forces which might be expected to strike against the North American continent by sea and air.

The present Nazi plan for world conquest is nothing new. From the time the Huns invaded Europe in the fourth century right down to the present day, the Prussian war lords have been dreaming and planning a campaign which would win for "The Master Race" world domination. The Nazis planned to over-run Europe by the late summer of 1941 and then start the invasion of the Americas in the fall of the same year. The most recent plan the German Junkers made was modernized and brought up to date in accordance with the advances in applied science and with the experience her scientists and military leaders had gained from the war of 1914-18.

The Germans have led the world as students of geographic political science since Karl Ritter (1779-1859) was Professor of History at Frankfort, and later Professor of Geography at Berlin. The German Junker Party established in Berlin "A Department of Geo-political Science".

After Hitler came to power Germany's leading Fifth Columnists, her high-ranking "Bund" officials, her master spies, were all trained in the College of Geo-political Science. It didn't matter if they were German-born, or children of German-born citizens residing in other countries, providing they espoused the Nazi cause, they all received the same education, in the same school, by the same professors.

Careful study would indicate that the newest Nazi plan for the invasion of the Americas was timed for the early winter of 1941-42. It apparently was designed to conform to the now well-known "Pincers" movement:

(1) The north-east arm was to be thrown from occupied Norway into the Province of Quebec, via Iceland, Greenland, Labrador and Lake St. John;

(2) The south-east arm was to be pushed across the Atlantic from Africa to countries in South America friendly to the Nazi cause and then into the U.S.A. and Mexico via the West Indies;

(3) The north-west arm was to be driven by the Japanese into Alaska and the Yukon Territories via the Aleutian Islands;

(4) The south-west arm was to be thrown across the Pacific by the Japanese. The many islands, over which there has been such bitter fighting since the Japanese raided Pearl Harbor, were to be used as the stepping-stones;

(5) If everything went according to plan, Mexico, willing or otherwise, was to be used by the combined Nazi-Japanese Army as the springboard from which the attack would take off against the United States. The southern thrust of the invasion was in all probability to be up the Mississippi River Valley in order to split the country in two sections. This plan also would have enabled the invaders to reach the thickly populated

German sections in the States of Michigan and Pennsylvania as quickly as possible.

(6) The combined Japanese-Nazi attack from the north-west upon Canada was to be down the Mackenzie River. The German and Japanese geologists, scientists, and metallurgists knew, beyond any question of reasonable doubt, that an oil pool of from 50,000,000 to 100,000,000 barrels was waiting on the North-West Territories to be drilled. They made their plans accordingly. This was to be their main source of fuel supply for the aerial invasion of America from the north-west.

When drawing up their stupendous plan of conquest, the geo-political scientists had been so thorough with regard to detail that every Fascist and every Japanese leader in the United States and Canada had their own particular part to play in the gigantic military extravaganza for which the plotters had used the whole world as their stage. They had an army of Fifth Columnists at their command.

Under the revised plan German Fifth Columnists were not permitted to act independently but only upon, and in accordance with, orders issued by their leaders. Independent action on the part of spy and saboteurs had proved ineffective and too costly during the war of 1914-18.

So confident were the real Nazi Storm Troopers in their belief that this ambitious plan for world conquest would succeed, that the German prisoners of war, landing at a port in the St. Lawrence from England in 1940, were arrogant and boastful. They claimed that by bringing them to Canada we were assisting the Nazi cause. They were quite certain that their period of internment would be of short duration. They were convinced they would be released by air-borne troops and armed again to assist in the plan of Nazi invasion. A great deal of credit for

the frustration of the Nazi plan belongs to the R.C.M.P., the F.B.I., and the British Intelligence Service.

Very few people realize the great importance that part of the world's surface, known as "The Northern Frigid Zone", plays in international politics. Most citizens in Canada and the United States think of the sub-Arctic regions as cold, bleak, ice-bound wildernesses, inhospitable and mostly uninhabited.

From the comfort of our central-heated homes, we shudder and feel sorry when we read a newspaper article which tells of the misfortune which has befallen one of the few trappers or traders who spend their lives north of the timber limits. We feel for them a kindly sympathy because, without them, Milady would not have her furs.

Rarely do we ever give a thought to our truly American citizens, the Indians, who live within the timber limits, and the Eskimos who live north of the 60th meridian of latitude. When we read in the newspapers that one of these tribes has lost half their number as the result of starvation or an epidemic of disease spread amongst them by the whites, we salve our conscience by sending a dollar or two to the Grenfell Mission.

Most average citizens consider Arctic explorers as individuals who are mildly insane. They must be, for what other reason could possess them to shut themselves away from civilization up in the frozen north for years at a time? When they do return to civilization, we treat them with benevolent consideration and patronize their lectures. In fact, we enjoy their tales of thrilling adventures and stories of almost unbelievable hardships. We return home feeling thankful for kindly mercies which permit us to live in luxurious comfort while others, poor souls, fight for a bare existence in temperatures which fall to 60 degrees below zero. But we don't do very much about these things.

It is safe to say that very few people would know the answer if asked during one of the Quiz Contests: "What great purpose or vocation inspired the famous Arctic explorers so that they suffered great physical hardships and risked life and limb trying to reach the Pole?" or, "What advantage will civilized society gain as the result of their explorations?" or "Have the benefits received to date been worth the self-sacrifice, suffering and death these men often endured?"

It is the purpose of this book to tell the story of the benefits already received, and of the great and wonderful harvest modern civilization will reap in the near future providing always that we don't fail to grasp our opportunities or sell our heritage for a mess of potage. We must also guard against the possibility that foreign nations may try to jump our Northern Claims.

As the direct result of this war there have been rapid advances in aviation, improvements in engineering, and many scientific discoveries regarding fuels and lubrications. Because of the unselfish lives and self-sacrifice of our great explorers, from Henry Hudson right down the line to Sir Hubert Wilkins and Stefansson, Canadian and American citizens may enjoy a share of the wealth, the secret of which was, until recently, locked up in the icebound Treasure House beyond the Arctic Circle.

But we must first become informed about our own North country; we must study international affairs; we must become students of geo-political science; and we must be on guard and watch that aggressor nations abroad, or the huge oil-interests, mining corporations, and the international cartels don't reap the benefit from the hundreds of millions of dollars of public money which has already been spent as a wartime necessity building the roads, and developing oil fields, laying pipe lines, building air bases and establishing the air-lines into that

hidden Treasure House of the Canadian Arctic. Canadian citizens must insist that the oil deposits, the vast mineral zones, the hydro-power, and the rest of the valuable natural resources are not exploited for individual gain or left idle as valuable capital reserves. It is our duty to our children to see that Canada's vast resources are developed by the people for the benefit of the people. There is no reason to doubt after investigation that there is in Canada's Northlands the same conditions which enabled Russia to develop Siberia and her territories east of the Ural Mountains in recent years.

Generally speaking, the Governments of Great Britain, the United States, and Canada showed very little active interest in pre-war days towards developing their northern territories. It was not until Nazi Germany reached out with greedy, blood-stained hands, to despoil us that our Governments financed the projects in Alaska, the Yukon, and the Eastern Arctic as war measures.

Under the past capitalistic regime, these vast deposits of oil, copper, coal, radium, manganese, bauxite, silver and gold were looked upon as welcome reserves to be guarded secretly until their present holdings had been worked out or run dry. The Canadian Government's action in taking over some mines in the public interest is a step in the right direction. It shows the Government is awake at last.

It would have been a sorry day for the English-speaking countries of the world if we had not been blessed with a few unselfish individuals who had foresight enough to realize the importance of holding control of the Arctic Territories—the future history of the world might have been changed almost overnight.

The purchase of Alaska by the United States from Russia in 1867, was one of the most profitable deals ever negotiated, but how near she came to losing Alaska to

the Japanese, because, in their ignorance, until this present war, people considered the purchase of Alaska as "Seward's Folly"!

The United Nations could never have acted quickly enough to checkmate Hitler's move to invade America, via the Arctic, had it not been for the great amount of knowledge and scientific data accumulated and filed away by British, American, Scandinavian, and Russian explorers during the past three hundred years.

While we were, to all intents and purposes, "asleep at the switch", Russia, Germany, and Japan worked feverishly from 1923 onwards to take advantage of our indifference which, in the light of recent events, amounted to little less than culpable ignorance and gross stupidity.

In 1939 many people referred to the present war as a "phoney war". In order to understand the political intrigue and military moves which led up to the outbreak of hostilities, a review of the events is necessary.

Perhaps before it is too late the people of the United Nations will realize how suicidal it would be, after defeating Naziism, to engage in a number of revolutionary or civil wars. All that is needed is to calmly and judiciously study recent history, and *discard* what has been proven to be bad and in error in Russia, Spain, Mexico, Italy, Germany, Britain and our own countries, the U.S.A. and Canada, since the last war. A new democratic constitution and international code of ethics must then be incorporated which, if backed up by an international police force, will guarantee recognition of the territorial rights of smaller nations, assure them of the privilege of selecting their own form of government, without the need of revolution and bloodshed, and promise them, in all sincerity, benevolent consideration of their economic problems, at the same time guaranteeing social security to the individual citizens of all countries.

After the first fierce blaze of Bolshevism, which followed the Russian Revolution in 1917, began to die down, there were, in Soviet Russia, the usual secondary reactions, party purges, and political upheavals, which put Trotsky into exile and Lenin into undisputed power until his death.

It was during Lenin's period of office that the Third International became so prominent in international politics and the Russian revolutionary leaders formed the Comintern to discuss and advise revolutionaries in other countries how best to conduct their campaigns. Moscow also financed the expenses of recognized Communist leaders in other countries. Under the Russian policy of pre-war days, that is, prior to 1939, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics were willing and ready to recognize and accept into their union any Communist group which, irrespective of the means employed, were able to form a government.

From 1930 onwards, particularly since Stalin came into power, Russian leaders have thoroughly explored and vigorously developed the natural resources in their Arctic and sub-Arctic territories. Many of these leaders had spent long weary years of their lives in Siberia as political exiles on account of their revolutionary activities. They had plenty of time to study the Arctic and dream of developing the extensive natural resources for the common good.

The dreams of these so-called visionaries were ultimately proven to be practical ideas. Soviet Russia quietly began to develop hydro-power, smelters were constructed, factories were built, and, in their great wisdom, cities were built around these newly discovered mineral zones. The leaders of Soviet Russia took their people to the new territories rather than haul the raw materials out to the old centres of population. It was a policy which

was sound economically in every way. It would never have paid to haul copper and iron ore and low-grade coal from within the Arctic Circle to Stalingrad, but it did pay to develop the north and build modern cities around the mineralized areas. It spread out the population; it housed them in modern cities expertly planned; it provided employment in mines and factories which guaranteed every man and woman willing to work social security; it was found economically sound to transport the finished products out to the markets of the world, and it opened up a new market in those centres of population for agricultural products which couldn't be grown in the Arctic Circle. Incidentally, this policy placed these industrial centres out of reach of Nazi bombers.

Ironically enough, it was this policy, and the foresight shown by the much-maligned and often-ridiculed Communists, which saved them from defeat when they were attacked by Germany in 1941. Munitions, trucks, tanks, ammunition, guns, all manufactured in the north and east, flowed down from the sub-Arctic and travelled west through the Ural Mountains to the Russian front. Undoubtedly, it was this comforting knowledge which inspired Stalin to defy Hitler when the rest of the world expected Moscow to fall in 1941. He said, "If necessary we will retreat and carry our scorched-earth policy back east of the Urals. Hitler does not know, and cannot conceive, what resources in man-power and materials we have east of the Ural Mountains."

It was these new industries, built by the people, for the benefit of the people, which enabled the Soviet Armies to hold out until the American Lend-Lease Plan and the British Aid to Russia plan, were put into active operation.

As opposed to Communism, Hitler's National-Socialism is nothing but a cloak for the Nazi form of a Military Dictatorship. Hitler was not satisfied to sit back and let

the citizens of other countries work out their own salvation. Oh, no! Hitler was so sure that he was right in his ideas that he determined to force them on the rest of the world, and put his race of supermen in charge of the destinies of civilization. There lies the difference between Russian Communism and German Naziism. Communism, in its pure form, demands equal rights for all and special privileges for none, except as the reward for outstanding services rendered the State.

Naziism also demands that all proprietary rights be absorbed by the State, and that even the individual belongs to the State. Hitler won over most of the capitalistic group, and the industrial and financial magnates by *promising them security against the Communists*, which were rapidly becoming a power in German politics after the Armistice in 1918.

Naziism is the rule of the majority by a small group of the chosen elect. This small minority is the Dictator's "Brain Trust". They are the real supermen. Unswerving loyalty to the Fuehrer, and the unquestionable obedience of the Nazi Storm Troopers is held, because of the promise they have been given that after the conquest they will be masters of the world.

Those of us who hate Hitlerism, and all for which it stands, see Hitler like the Devil. The Devil took Christ up onto the mountain and, showing him, promised him the whole world if he would fall down and adore him. Hitler promised the German youth the whole world on condition that they give themselves up to him, body and soul, and promise him unswerving loyalty.

Therein lies the cause of the war between Nazi Germany and Communistic Russia. There never was, and never can be, any real friendship between two peoples with such violent disagreements in ideas. Hitler, as a sign

of good faith to the financial interests who joined his party, did by means of his Gestapo wage an unrelenting and merciless war upon German Communists. Every German Jew was accused of being a Communist, and both Communists and Jews in Germany have been subject to the most brutal, inhuman and bestial atrocities it is possible to imagine. As a matter of fact, there is plenty of evidence now on file which indicates that Nazi methods of despotism, used when trying to bring into subjection a strong mind, often descend to such levels of perversity as to go beyond the understanding of the average individual.

Hitler's avowed policy for world conquest was the Junker plan of infiltration followed by forceful invasion by military units of Iron Guards, Black Shirts and Supermen. The events leading up to the Munich meetings are typical illustrations of German infiltration methods. Hitler was always ready to give financial backing and military aid to Nazi groups in other countries. When his Fifth Columnists had done their work, he marched in with his Storm Troopers. It was his original intention, as expressed in *Mein Kampf*, never to make a move into another country until his welcome was assured. Departure from this rule has landed him in serious trouble. The invasion of Russia will probably be his last mistake.

German students of geo-political science worked out a plan for aiding British, Canadian and American Fascists to gain power. This plan had been conceived about 1923, its details had been worked out by 1933, but it was not supposed to materialize until 1941. When the British Government declared war on Germany over the Polish incident in September 1939, it upset the plans of the Nazi super-strategists. The scientists and experts in geo-political science had to busy themselves, adjust their plans, and take care of this premature delivery.

From 1923 onwards, German agents had been very

active in Canada. The Canadian field of research was considered of such great importance, in relation to the Nazi plan for world conquest, that they sent no less a personage than Herr von Ribbentrop to Canada.

He established himself in Quebec and was employed as a timekeeper on the new Quebec Bridge project. Even in this very humble capacity he soon was making friends with Quebec politicians and Roman Catholic dignitaries. This latter fact seemed strange and inconsistent, because, generally speaking, the National-Socialist Party in Germany didn't get along very well with the Roman Catholic Church. In Quebec, it would appear, certain of the hierarchy *unconsciously played with the devil in order to strengthen their grip on Provincial and Federal politics*. It will be recalled with interest that Canadian Fascists were located and finally arrested in a hide-out in Northern Quebec after Canada entered the war against Germany. It will also be recalled that Tim Buck and other Communistic leaders had an even more secure hide-out.

It was not very long before this smooth-spoken hypocrite advanced himself from the provincial to the federal field of activities. In Ottawa he made it his business to mix with the highest society, in order to conduct his Machiavelian activities where they could do most harm in Canadian politics. Many wealthy people thought this unscrupulous Hun was the most charming Beau Brummel they had ever met. He had by this time become officially the accredited agent for European firms exporting to Canada the most expensive and exclusive wines. In reality, he was one of the heads of an international gang of racketeers who in order to create further chaos in Canada and break down her economic system, smuggled thousands of barrels of German alcohol into Canada duty free. Their activities corrupted police and customs officials

ranking from insignificant part-time Customs and Revenue officers drawing \$240 per annum, to the highest office holders in the Department of Inland Revenue. One has only to read the evidence taken before the Royal Commission, which investigated the Canadian Customs Service, 1925-27, in order to see how high and wide-spread was the corruption. It actually reached and affected Cabinet Ministers and Senators.

The reason Germany spent so much time and money corrupting Canadian Customs and Revenue officers, and Police officials in the Province of Quebec and the Maritimes, was because the German Department of Geo-politics (which planned all Hitler's international moves) had decided to help Canadian Fascists via the Iceland-Greenland-Labrador-Lake St. John route when the time was ripe for them to make their bid for power.

It is an historical fact that about this time provincial politicians in Quebec forced the federal authorities to withdraw the Royal Canadian Mounted Police from duty in the province. The R.C.M.P. couldn't be corrupted or bribed. It was imperative that Canadian Fascist leaders have "something" on nearly every important Customs and Police official so they could enforce their silence by blackmail methods if necessary. Then again, once a man has betrayed his country and broken his oath of office, it is a comparatively small step to convert him into an out-and-out Fascist ready to overthrow his Government and betray his country to obtain power.

Germany planned to do in Canada what she actually did achieve in Norway, Denmark, and Holland. That Hitler intended to invade Canada and the United States via the Iceland-Greenland-Labrador route is proved by the fact that he took over both Denmark and Norway as two of his first objectives.

Denmark owned both Iceland and Greenland. Norway was the most logical base from which to launch his attacks against the Western Hemisphere.

If further proof is necessary, it can be found in the pre-war negotiations German interests entered into for the purchase of Anticosti Island in the St. Lawrence. They also tried to obtain ownership of St. Pierre and Miquelon Islands owned by the French, off the coast of Newfoundland. Nazi-controlled survey parties covered the north shore of the St. Lawrence and Labrador, as well as the whole Canadian Arctic, during the period 1930-39. They explored Greenland and Iceland, but, in order for her grandiose plan of world conquest to fully materialize Germany had to have the co-operation of Japan in the West, and certain South American countries in the South. That her present plan failed is now history, but the thought of how near it came to succeeding is still material for horrible nightmares for those who know the facts. The United Nations and particularly Canada and the United States of America must make sure that Germany is never again allowed to develop as a military power sufficiently strong to profit by her mistakes in this war and try a revised plan at some future date.

History, never very widely read, has already recorded the plans Germany made to invade the United States of America during the first World War of 1914-18. Briefly, this plan was to estrange Japan from the Allies the latter part of 1917, and have her use her fleet to land an army of 500,000 men in Mexico in 1918. The Japanese military leaders with whom she opened negotiations in 1917 are the same who won power during 1918-30 and made Japan one of the Axis partners.

Mexico was expected to co-operate, as exposed by the Zimmerman notes intercepted by the British in 1916. The combined armies of Japan and Mexico, augmented

by German and Japanese nationals residing in the States, were intended to invade the United States up the Mississippi Valley.

For many years before the War of 1914-18, Germany took an active interest in Mexican politics. She played one political faction in Mexico against another. She played both sides against the middle. During that decade, Mexico was torn apart by civil war. Germany supplied unlimited quantities of arms and munitions to both sides. She had an understanding with both leaders, unknown to the other. Regardless of which side won the Mexican Civil War, both leaders had agreed to espouse the German cause when the time was ripe for action against the United States of America.

German agents overlooked no opportunity to stir up ill-will and arouse actual hatred in the hearts of all classes of Mexicans against citizens of the United States. It is only necessary to recall the Vera Cruz and Tampico incidents in 1913-14 to realize how hard the Germans worked to create an atmosphere of hostility between the two countries. They kept hatred at fever pitch so that it could be fanned into actual warfare at the right moment.

Millions of dollars worth of rifles, machine guns and ammunition were shipped into Mexico during 1912-14 from Germany via Hamburg and Antwerp. Most of these munitions moved under false consignment. Bullets were done up in tins labelled Swiss condensed milk; revolvers were labelled as axe heads; rifles and machine guns were packed and marked as "drills and tools" and other mining equipment. A case of detonators was labelled "Bible tracts" and marked "handle with care". German agents were on hand in Puerto Mexico to take personal responsibility for the safe delivery of the religious tracts.

German agents never ceased to talk with Mexicans about the wars they had fought against the U.S.A. They

were forever goading them about the loss of land they had been forced to cede to the victorious American armies. Smooth-tongued Huns convinced the simple Mexican citizens that financial interests in the United States and Great Britain had no further interest in Mexico's future than to exploit her mineral and oil deposits for their own benefit while they kept Mexicans in financial bondage.

In 1916 Germany offered to help Mexico win back the territories she had lost and offered to give her back the States of Texas, New Mexico and Louisiana as a special inducement. At this particular time German emissaries made known to Mexico their intention of waging unrestricted submarine warfare against the Allies and predicted they would starve them into submission by the end of 1917.

After the United States declared war on Germany in April 1917, renewed efforts were made by Germany to win Mexico's active participation. Mexico was told that if she would agree, Japan would break with Great Britain in order to help Mexico attack the United States.

German military leaders even suggested the time for the invasion of the United States. They advised Mexico to strike as soon as the American Expeditionary Force was safely in France and the U.S. Navy had proceeded overseas to co-operate with the British Fleet convoying merchant ships as promised. The German super-strategists felt certain that the Japanese military leaders, even then, would double-cross Great Britain in order to stab America in the back and obtain control of the Orient as soon as the greatest part of the U.S. Navy had been moved from the Pacific to the Atlantic. They tried to convince Mexico that their opinions were right. They did everything in their power to persuade Mexico to act as the springboard from which to launch the attack against the United States.

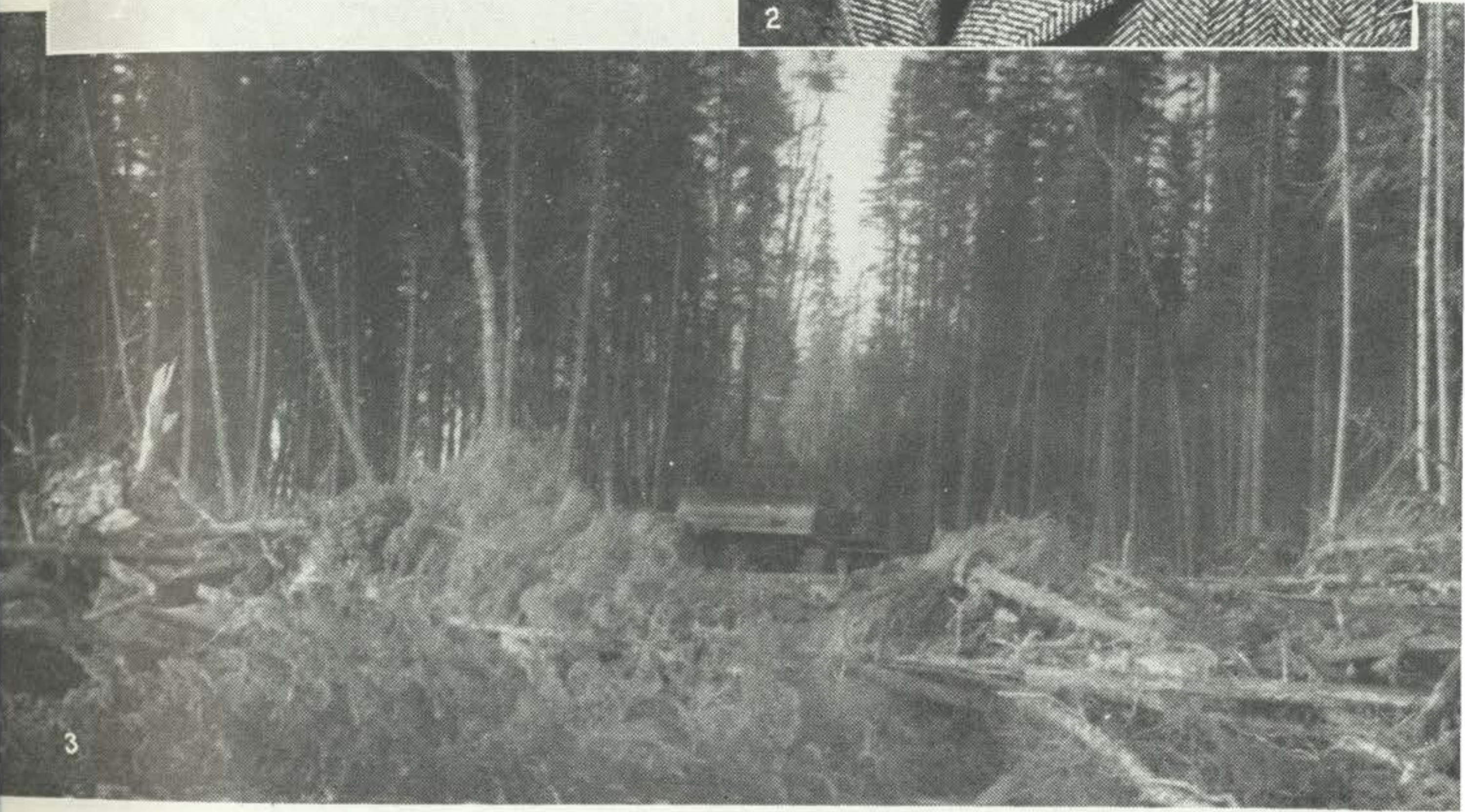
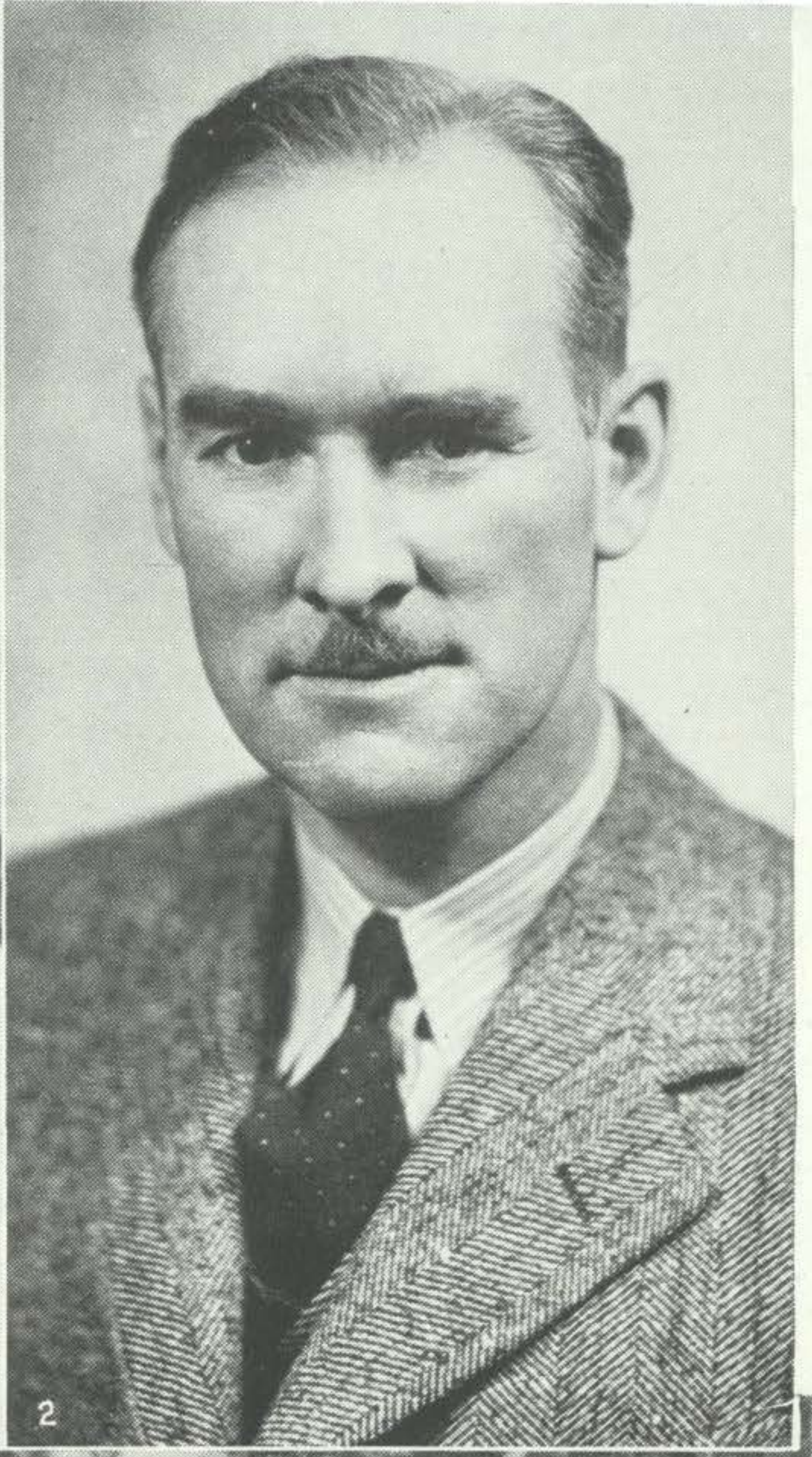
The Mississippi Valley was chosen as the invasion route because such tactics would divide the United States in two sections right up the middle. It would also permit the invading forces to hook up in the north-east with the intensely German-populated sections in Michigan and Pennsylvania.

The Japanese Nationals in the States were to revolt upon receiving a pre-arranged command in the West. A German-planned sabotage campaign was calculated to destroy the industrial plants and transportation systems in the rest of the United States.

Germany's unrestricted campaign of submarine warfare failed in 1917, just as it appeared to be within an ace of success, owing to the crack-up amongst the U-boat crews. Her plan to draw the British Grand Fleet into a submarine ambush and thus reduce its strength to something on a near equality with her own, also failed. As time went on the failure of the German Armies to break through in France to the channel ports also cost her prestige. Mexico and Japan, reluctant to gamble on anything but a certainty, withdrew from the game of political intrigue. If the memory of the American public was not so short-lived, and if the average man in the street was better informed about international affairs, there should never have been a Pearl Harbor.

By the middle of 1918, the German High Command was faced with mutinous conditions amongst her naval crews, the complete collapse of her submarine warfare, and the rapidly growing dissatisfaction amongst her Army personnel. Most of the trouble could be traced to the activities of German "Reds" who had learned their technique from the Russian Bolshevists, Lenin and Trotsky, during their sojourn in Germany in 1915 and 1916.

So rapidly did the Russian-trained Communists proceed to undermine the German morale that by October



(Top) The Author and Bill Durrell; (bottom) Bulldozer clearing a path for road through woods.



(Top) Native Boy trappers return with ptarmigan and rabbit to their tilt; (centre left) Newfoundland Ranger with Montagnais Indians; (centre right) Father McGuire with Indian family; (bottom) Bulldozers clearing road to North West River.

1918 the civilian population had revolted beyond the control of the military authorities. Mutiny was an actual fact in the High Seas Fleet. Unable to cope with the increasing strength of the Allied Armies, while her own house was threatening to crumble like a pack of cards, her leaders asked for, and were granted, an Armistice. This was signed November 11th, 1918.

Germany's military forces were not beaten on the field of battle. Her leaders only asked time out in order to adjust their domestic affairs. From 1918 onwards, German war lords were studying the lessons they had learned from the war of 1914-18 and they were hard at work correcting their mistakes.

Once Hitler had gained political control of the country, and Communism in Germany had been suppressed, Hitler joined forces with the Junkers and took the youth of the German nation under his patronage and prepared them to become arrogant, military bullies. Soon they were ready and willing instruments with which the Nazi leaders hoped to conquer the rest of the world and harness mankind into Hitler's New Order. It was the Nazi intention to make all freedom-loving people political slaves, and menial serfs, destined to work all their lives for the benefit of his race of Supermen.

By 1938 the German military agents had investigated the Arctic territories enough to convince them that the logical way in which to invade the Western Hemisphere was to follow the same route as that followed by the Norsemen and Celts who discovered Iceland, Greenland, Labrador and travelled down the coast of Newfoundland, Nova Scotia and Maine long before Columbus was born. The details of the travels of these early voyagers can be read in various books, one of the most interesting being *Greenland* by Vilhjalmur Stefansson. The extent of their travels down the east coast of America has been estab-

lished beyond reasonable doubt by the finding of ruins, relics, and Runic inscriptions as far south as what is now the State of Virginia.

Human history and the study of geo-political science is like an exciting drama. Each succeeding generation is an act in the play. How is it we forget so easily what has gone before?

The recent German plan called for ruthless bombing of Great Britain, U-boats were to starve her into submission; the quick occupation of Denmark, and Norway, and the establishment of air bases in Iceland, Greenland and Labrador and possibly Newfoundland, were to admit the Nazi hordes into America. This attack was undoubtedly planned to take place during the winter of 1941-42. Her scientists and aviation experts had convinced the German war lords that it would be possible to occupy the northern territories immediately after the freeze-up in the fall. Additional troops and supplies could be flown in during the winter; landing planes on the snow following the freeze-up had been ably demonstrated many times during recent years. It had also been demonstrated that it was practical to construct permanent runways which would accommodate their largest aircraft before the break-up of winter the following spring.

It is also probable that the remaining powerful units of the German Fleet supported by all the U-boats available were to escort a large convoy of merchant ships to pre-arranged locations suitable in Greenland and Labrador, and deliver them safely with a year's requirements of machinery, supplies and construction material, just before the freeze-up of 1941.

Subsequent events and the construction programme undertaken by the Canadian and United States Governments since September 1941 prove that the Germanic plan for invading the Western Hemisphere was feasible.

As the story unfolds and explains the reasons for the moves, occasioned by political intrigue, it will be realized why so many people referred to the early stages of the present conflict as a "phoney war".

Hitler and his military advisors, however, made two big mistakes. First, they underestimated the ability of the R.A.F. to fight and the British people to adapt themselves to aerial "blitz", and "take it on the chin". Secondly, they underestimated Joseph Stalin's ability as a strategist.

The Russian move against Finland was very disconcerting and upset Hitler's calculations tremendously. If Russia occupied Finland she would be in a position to control the vast mineral deposits in northern Scandinavia as well as to attack, and if necessary, cut Hitler's lines of communication between Europe and America when he launched his planned invasion. And Hitler didn't trust Stalin.

Hitler was willing to negotiate with Stalin and offer him any reasonable terms to follow a "hands-off" policy. He offered Soviet Russia half of Poland; in fact, Hitler was willing to give anything if Stalin would only stay strictly neutral. Stalin listened, but knowing Hitler's true character he decided to try him out. The Soviet Armies were ordered to make it appear that little Finland was holding her own, if not actually defeating the Russians.

Hitler fell for this subterfuge and almost immediately showed his hand by aiding the Finns and by breaking agreements he had already made with Russia. Stalin had out-played him at his own game of political intrigue. Afterwards he unmasked Hitler's real plans for world conquest.

The people of Great Britain were still holding out. The more planes Hitler sent across the Channel to bomb England off the face of the earth, the more the Nazi's

losses in planes increased. Defied by Churchill, unmasked by Stalin, Hitler grew panicky. The Nazi High Command saw how dangerously Hitler was becoming involved with Russia. Otherwise Rudolph Hess never would have flown to Scotland in the hope that he could convince British statesmen that it would be advisable for Britain to call off the war with Germany. It is reasonably safe to presume that Rudolph Hess accredited *Russia with a plan for the invasion of America* similar to the Nazi-conceived plan. Hess undoubtedly tried to convince British leaders that Communism was the greatest danger to civilization.

That Hess failed in his mission is now past history. Hitler was on the horns of a dilemma. He was very much between the devil and the deep blue sea. There was just one thought which comforted him. His men were invincible, his machines unconquerable. Stalin's Armies hadn't put up a very good showing in their war with Finland. Stalin wasn't as yet prepared for war. That was the answer. Hitler convinced himself that he could completely subjugate Russia before the snow flew in 1941. He could then keep faith with his Japanese allies and keep to his schedule for the invasion of America. Hitler launched his terrific attack on the Soviet in June of 1941.

The Japanese were convinced the Germans would beat Russia, otherwise they would have delayed their attack upon Pearl Harbor and the Phillipine Islands. Their move into the Aleutian Islands, Alaska and the Yukon Territories were timed to coincide with the Nazi thrust across Iceland, Greenland, and into Labrador and Quebec.

Germany was so certain that she would be in a position to carry out her original plans by the winter of 1941, that Lord Haw-Haw, German Radio broadcast personality, was instructed to give a special discourse on Labrador. He told his listeners that Germany knew all the Canadian

Government was doing at Goose Bay. He thanked them for their efforts, saying it would save Germany that much labour. He concluded by informing the Military Garrison at Rigolet that they would be cut off and starved to death before the spring of 1942. Rigolette is an isolated outpost on the coast at the entrance to Lake Melville, 113 miles from Goose Bay Airport. Lord Haw-Haw said he fully sympathized with these brave men and felt sorry they would have to suffer the slow lingering death by starvation.

Lord Haw-Haw was wrong—his Nazi masters were wrong. The garrison he predicted would be cut off and starved to death were relieved in the summer of 1943 and, according to recent casualty lists, lived long enough to knock hell out of some of Hitler's crack divisions while fighting on the Italian front.

What Hitler did was to "let down" his Japanese allies. They moved from the West according to the pre-arranged schedule. They moved into the Aleutian Islands, they occupied the strategic islands in the Pacific, but they were left hanging out on a limb. They were therefore forced to withdraw from the Aleutians and it is reasonable to suppose they will withdraw elsewhere and try to consolidate their holdings in China and the Malay States.

The general outline of the plan for Nazi invasion of the American continent has been given. A review of the details of the plan is necessary to understand how the vast organization for conquest was intended to operate once the orders were issued.

The syllabus of training and education given at the College of Geo-political Science was carefully prepared, and lectures were given covering every detail. According to information received, the first lecture was the general outline of the plan. The second dealt with the methods to

be used for infiltration. The set-up in each country was to be organized as follows:

(1) The head was the German Diplomatic Service because, under international agreement, diplomats and their staffs were immune from interference by the police or military authorities of the country to which they were appointed.

(2) The many German Consular Officers located in all countries.

(3) The heads of the German Bund and Fascist leaders were usually chosen from amongst citizens with Fascist sympathies.

(4) The captains and lieutenants, who by reason of their education and training were able to secure and hold lucrative positions in the industries and institutes of learning of the countries they planned to destroy, were often Germans who had taken out naturalization papers.

(5) The rank and file of the Fifth Columnists.

The recruiting of members for the Nazi Fifth Column was carefully organized. The names and particulars of every German who had emigrated since 1867 was forwarded to the heads of the German Bund in the country in which he had settled. A card-index system was prepared which contained the following information: name; where and when born in Germany; date the man left Germany; the country to which he went; married or single; when he left Germany; relatives of man still residing in Germany—father and mother, children, brothers and sisters, uncles and aunts, cousins. The purpose of this information was to use these relatives to influence those who had left Germany to become adherents of the Nazi cause and to give allegiance to Hitler. If the Germans residing in foreign countries did not respond to persuasion, then force could be used by threatening their relatives

who were still residing in Germany, with the wrath of the Nazi Gestapo.

In this manner Hitler's agents were able to recruit thousands of men with German blood in their veins, into the ranks of the Nazi Bund and the Fascist organizations. Some very ardent Nazi women even went so far as to return to Germany to have their babies born in the Fatherland as true Nazis.

Another lecture given in the College of Geo-political Science explained to the Nazi agents how the Fifth Column could be organized to live off the country they were intended to destroy, without cost to the German Reich.

The heads of the Fifth Column were well educated and well trained. They were to secure good positions in factories, chemical plants, the engineering works, the universities, the breweries, the building industry, and in the higher ranks of commerce and industry. Those who could not secure remunerative employment were to join the underworld. They were advised to become bootleggers, managers of houses of assignation, run gambling joints, etc. They were instructed to become human leeches, capable of living and growing wealthy upon the money they took from the pockets of their intended victims. The next lecture taught Nazi agents how to use evidence obtained from Fifth Columnists located in the underworld to blackmail Police, Custom and Revenue officers and other important officials who had accepted bribes, etc., in order to enroll them as active members of the Nazi or Fascist parties.

Part of the Nazi plan was designed to upset the political and economic affairs of all countries. Therefore, in order to upset the economy of a nation, cartels, combines, and Nazi-subsidized companies were organized to upset industry and rob the countries concerned of neces-

sary stocks of chemicals and supplies required for use in case of war. In addition to these forms of commercial piracy, it was planned that established industry had to be thrown into a state of chaos and confusion to bring about depression, unemployment, strife between capital and labour, and general discontent in the minds of the citizens of the great democracies. In order to do this, the Nazi agents fostered, supported, financed and encouraged in every way possible, the activities of bootleggers, smugglers, gangsters and racketeers who disorganized legitimate business and made citizens thoroughly disgusted with conditions and anxious for a change.

The Nazis were too smart to stick out their own necks by taking an active part in illegal practices, therefore they often used the avarice of the Jews (whom they ultimately intended to destroy) to build up the bootlegging, smuggling rackets and organize the illegal and unethical business corporations intended to rob the country of revenue and disorganize and bankrupt established manufacturers and industries. The smuggling of cloth, silk, and other textiles, into various countries made bankrupt many long-established, reputable concerns in the U.S.A. and Canada, because they found it impossible to compete with firms who were disreputable enough to use smuggled materials in the manufacture of their goods.

Just to give a few examples: Overalls and other cotton goods manufactured by prison labour in the United States, were bought in car-load quantities by Jewish interests and smuggled into Canada via Black Rock and other Quebec frontier customs ports of entry, by bribing Customs officials to the detriment and final disaster of Canadian cotton mills, thus bringing about unemployment and disorder. Japanese silks and Scotch tweeds were smuggled into the U.S.A. and Canada by the railway car-load, and these duty-free products were used by Jewish

firms to put the legitimate tailoring and dress-manufacturing industries into liquidation. Liquor and drugs were smuggled into both the U.S.A. and Canada, in order that gangsters might flourish and the Governments be robbed of legitimate revenue. This was the type of economic warfare the School of Geo-political Science in Berlin organized to bring about unemployment and discontent amongst the population of the countries they intended to conquer.*

The fact that Germany actually used these methods to conquer Norway, Denmark, Holland, Belgium, France and several of the Balkan States is evidence enough. She set up the same organization and used the same methods in Canada, the United States and in many of the South American republics. Many of the seeds she set are still well planted.

The next thing taught was discipline, and the need for concerted action as opposed to disorganized and individual effort. The great strength and effectiveness of the Nazi Fifth Column was in secrecy and the fact that ninety per cent of it remained hidden and unknown until the word was given for it to strike. The element of surprise often made up for lack of actual numbers.

Last but by no means least, was the course of instruction given in organization, transportation, and effective action when the moment came to act. Aviation has done away with frontiers and boundaries. The system of paralysing the nerve-centre of a whole country was thoroughly thought out and taught in most minute detail.

Just before the time was ripe to strike, Nazi Storm Troopers were to be sent to provide the main force to subdue areas in which opposition or resistance might be expected to be encountered. Nazi leaders were taught

*Evidence given before Royal Commission which sat to investigate Stevens Report on the Canadian Customs Service, 1925-1926.

how a few thousand Fifth Columnists, assisted by a few hundred well-trained Storm Troopers, could subdue and render helpless the citizens of a country numbering several millions.

The plan taught in the College of Geo-political Science was that Fifth Columnists were to be located wherever possible in key positions in every country, in order that they in turn could provide hiding and friendly shelter to disguised Nazi troops immediately prior to the time set for revolution and invasion.

Many millions of dollars were made available to Nazi agents in Canada with which to buy necessary real estate. In 1939, Nazi agents in Canada were supplied with over \$6,000,000 in one transfer of funds from banks in the U.S.A., with which to purchase real estate which covered strategical points of military and economical importance in this Dominion. The evidence of the Dies Committee and the F.B.I. of the United States proves that the organization set forth above had gained considerable headway in America.

CHAPTER 2

European War Clouds Roll Towards America

The war situation in Europe is reviewed from 1939 to midsummer 1941—The U.S.A. and Canada decide to fortify the north-eastern Arctic—Eric Fry, Canadian Surveyor, President Roosevelt's son, and others are ordered to fly into the Canadian Northlands and find suitable locations for airports.

FROM the very beginning of human history, wars, while destructive and brutal, have always directly or indirectly contributed greatly to the advancement of science and the improvement of the human race. At least, those members of the human race who have been fortunate enough to survive the horrors resulting from man's inhumanity to man, have benefited.

Wars, while inhuman, provide opportunity for heroism and self-sacrifice. The Crimean War provided the opportunity which enabled heroic men and women to study epidemics of disease and the cause of infections resulting from wounds. This war has produced penicillin and the sulfa drugs, and miracles of modern surgery. The science of medicine and the practice of surgery have

always advanced more in a few short years of war than they would normally have done in a hundred years of peace.

Wars have also been the direct cause of promoting the advancement of transportation and aeronautics. Just as man is born in pain and developed as the result of self-sacrifice on the part of our mothers, so also were most of the great benefits enjoyed by the civilized world today developed out of human sufferings and perfected because, of sheer necessity, we were forced into making heavy sacrifices in order to survive. We had to learn to beat our enemies at their own game. Human nature is such that we can always find millions of dollars per day to fight a war, but we always fail miserably to provide the comparatively small amount of public money required in peacetime for furthering the progress and happiness of the human race. If all nations had spent judiciously as much money winning the peace after 1919, as they spent slaughtering each other from 1914 to 1918, there would have been no excuse for another war. We must be prepared and willing to spend just as much money during the post-war period to winning and consolidating the Peace, as we have spent already towards defeating our enemies. If we neglect to benefit by bitter experience and fail to win the Peace this time, civilization will collapse. *We must not fail to win the Peace after this present war is over, or chaos will result.* There is no alternative.

Hitler, to further his own ideas of a new order, planned to destroy ruthlessly and without compunction the people of those nations who disagreed with him. His brutally conceived methods of aerial "Blitz" were calculated to overcome all opposition. He planned to horrify and shock decent ordinary human beings into subjection. He was determined that the rest of the world were to be

slaves of his master race. But Hitler forgot that real men and women always have chosen, and always will choose, to die rather than surrender their freedom.

Hitler also forgot that, in England, every man's home is his castle. No matter how humble, to an Englishman there is no place like home. The Englishman is lord and master within his home. The English law respects the sanctity of the home.

During the terrible days of 1940-42 when Hitler's maniacal bombing attacks were made on the British Isles, "the few to whom the world owes so much", to quote Mr. Churchill, were discovered in the rank and file of the R.A.F. It is the same today when robot bombs sail through the sky. The civilian population of Britain have amazed the rest of the world by their cheerfulness, fortitude, and courage under the most fiendishly conceived and most ruthlessly delivered attack ever perpetrated by one class of human beings upon another.

By what appears to be a miracle, the British people survived and held Hitler and his vast armies of destructive power at bay from September 1939 until the United States of America realized that the very existence of civilized society was threatened by the powerful and ruthless military machine which had been designed and developed by Hitler and the other Axis powers.

Just as the Britishers had done during their hour of sorrow, so also did the Russians when attacked. Patiently and courageously they fought back Hitler's whirlwind drive in June of 1941. Once again a miracle happened. Crushed and bruised, but never beaten, the Russian armies, aided by supplies sent them by the Allies, fought back, surrendering nothing of value to the enemy.

Unselfishly the Russians carried out a scorched-earth policy so thorough and so severe that it finally proved effective. Hitler was brought to a halt. His long-planned

and vigorously-sustained offensive on the Eastern front was brought to a standstill. But Hitler was not stopped before he had conquered or obtained economical and military control of more than two-thirds of Europe.

Japan, following her treacherous attack on Pearl Harbor, soon controlled the greater part of the Orient.

Everyone connected with the prosecution of the war against Hitler realized that only a vigorous offensive would destroy the Nazi military machine. Economic sanctions proved ineffective. The Russians in their throes of anguish cried out for a "second front". The armchair critics of all Allied Nations demanded and howled for a "Policy of determined, vigorous action". Public opinion, voiced in the Press, demanded that the Allies take the initiative and go on the offensive. Rich and poor alike demanded the invasion of Europe.

Few people can possibly realize how numerous and how gigantic are the problems of organizing supplies and providing transportation for an invading army. All these problems must be solved beyond any question of doubt before offensive action on a large scale can be undertaken with any prospect of success. At least two full years' requirements of ammunition and supplies must be within easy reach of an invading army if they are not to risk being left out on a limb and possibly liquidated. The landing at Dieppe, although planned with all the care possible, and using all the knowledge available to the higher commands of the Navy, Army and Air Force at that time, proved to be a ghastly and costly operation out of which the Allied Cause gained nothing but experience.

Then again, another very important consideration which must be attended to before the man-power of any nation or nations may be launched in an all-out offensive and invade other countries, is to make sure that their own house is in order at home, and that all back doors

and windows are secured against mis-fire of plans and possible retaliation on the part of the enemy.

German U-boats from 1939 to 1942 were sinking Allied merchant ships quicker than we could build them. It mattered little how many ships we built or how fast we built them, if enemy U-boats sent them and their valuable cargoes to the bottom before they reached their destinations. The men of the Merchant Navy remained loyal. They suffered hardships beyond ordinary endurance; they passed through one continuous nightmare of danger; they prayed for the day the Allied Commands could give them sufficient surface escort and proper air-coverage, to force enemy U-boats to accept equal risks when attacking an escorted convoy. And 29,200 of them died.

The immediate problem the Allied Commanders had to solve before considering the invasion of Europe was to build faster and better-armed escort vessels; provide long-range bombers, and build small aeroplane carriers to protect our Merchant Navy convoys. Until we mastered the U-boat menace no plan of invasion on a large scale could be carried out for the simple reason that the naval authorities could not give the military authorities any definite assurance that they could deliver overseas the required number of troops together with the necessary amounts of provisions and supplies on a regular schedule.

Another angle the Allied Commanders had to consider, was the uncertainty of production of munitions and war materials on the home front. One has only to compile the number of work days lost due to strikes that have occurred in Great Britain, Canada and the United States, and add the very considerable number of working days lost through absenteeism to understand that no military high command in its sane moments would order an all-

out invasion involving the movements of millions of troops, thousands of planes, hundreds of ships, and thousands of mechanized transports, without being satisfied that they had at least two full years' supplies within easy reach, ahead of time.

Then again, before the Allies could invade Europe, we had to obtain command of the air. Much less time is required to build planes on a mass production basis than to build ships; therefore, the Allied leaders decided to go all out to win air supremacy while the other matters such as the building of escort and cargo vessels was shaping up.

The first action taken was to enlarge Botwood airport in Newfoundland. It was a going concern in peacetime. Next, additional airports were built on the east Atlantic Coast, and used from which to operate anti-submarine patrols as well as train fighter squadrons in defence tactics. Planes began rolling off the assembly lines, and the now famous Atlantic Ferry Command grew and grew, absorbing into its organization experienced "Snorter" pilots, friendly to the Allied cause, from all over the world. Generally speaking, a "Snorter" pilot is one who has flown a land plane over the ocean.

These Ferry Command pilots received big money during the early days of the war, and they earned their pay. I spoke to one of the "Old-timers" who admitted he had "salted away \$30,000 in addition to buying a ranch". This pilot claimed he had always wanted to ride horses but had taken to flying in the early days as the "next best thing", because he couldn't learn how to stay on the back of a horse. Anyway, he is determined to ride horses after the war even if it kills him. It is understood that some Ferry Command pilots were paid \$1,000 a month with an additional \$500 bonus for each plane they delivered safely.

In Newfoundland weather conditions are bad, and good flying days are comparatively few. In the early days of the present war accidents occurred frequently. Many costly planes and valuable lives were lost. It became obvious also that the Newfoundland airports could not handle the increasing air traffic with the regularity required by the Allied Air Command in Great Britain, if they were to use "round-the-clock methods" for bombing Germany into submission.

Actual experience in Europe showed the necessity of having plenty of fighter planes to escort the bombers when over enemy territory. Fighters couldn't be flown across the Atlantic under their own power from Newfoundland, and there wasn't sufficient shipping space available to carry the numbers required.

The situation didn't look any too good. Then along came the Empire Air Training scheme, well ahead of schedule. Canada began turning out British, American, Australian, New Zealand and Canadian air-crews as fast as the factories produced planes. The newly trained air-crews turned out to be first-class aviators.

In June, 1941, Hitler double-crossed Stalin. Perhaps it would be more correct to say Hitler knew he couldn't fool Stalin with false promises. He therefore attacked Russia, hoping to catch her unprepared and off guard. Russia became an ally of the United Nations. After this events began to happen rapidly as far as Canadian and United States aviation is concerned.

The story as I see it is this. Stalin, a much better salesman than Rudolph Hess, convinced the United Nations of Hitler's plan to invade America. There was only one obvious thing for the United Nations to do. That was to take a page out of Hitler's own book and use his own cleverly-worked-out plan for invading the North American continent, only in reverse.

This idea had great possibilities. If airports could be established across the top of the world, along what is known as the Great Circle Route from Canada to Britain, the distances would be much shorter between hops across the Atlantic, and the margin of safety greatly increased. By establishing airports in Labrador, Baffin Land, Greenland, Iceland and other parts of the Arctic, fighter planes might be flown across, under their own power. As the idea unfolded itself, the planners could mentally picture one long continuous procession of planes, bombers, fighters, even gliders, leaving the production lines in the U.S.A., all bound for Britain or other fronts in India, Burma, North Africa, Australia and the Middle East. Flying north and west via Edmonton, planes could be delivered from the factories in America straight to the Russian battle zone. In that way the Allies could begin to repay Russia the tremendous debt they owe for her sacrifice in human lives. Another consideration in favour of the above plan was the fact that the proposed airports could be used in case of invasion if necessary for the defence of America.

Carrying out this tremendous undertaking required many millions in cash, thousands of skilled and unskilled men, dozens of cargo vessels, and hundreds of thousands of tons of material. It meant building not only airports, but dozens of radio stations and meteorological observation posts throughout the Arctic. At first it appeared to be a wonderful dream—but it turned into a nightmare the more one studied the idea.

A review of the military situation, as it presented itself in July, 1941, was far from reassuring. One thing, however, stood out like a sore thumb. If we were going to stop Hitler at all, it would be done more quickly and with less cost in man-power by air than by any other method. It was equally certain that if we were going to

beat the Nazis at their own game, we had to complete the gargantuan project within one year.

It is to the credit of all concerned that the Allied leaders grasped the great importance of the idea quickly and clearly and acted without the slightest undue delay. Having definitely decided to go ahead with the project they delved into the details and started to work like trojans.

There were many obstacles to be overcome, obstacles so numerous and grave that they might have discouraged men of less courage and determination.

Ships, dozens of them, had to be found in which to carry cement, building materials, machinery and stores. The U-boats were playing havoc with Allied shipping at the time and a thousand different interests were clamouring for cargo space.

The necessary priorities had to be rushed through for half a million tons of materials; experienced and reliable contractors and construction men had to be interviewed; sea captains, bush pilots, and surveyors experienced in Arctic conditions had to be located and interviewed; plans had to be drawn up for fighting never-ending battles against the elements of nature. Time and secrecy were the great essentials. It was as the famous Admiral of the United States Navy said, "Full speed ahead and damn the torpedoes!"

When a project of such prodigious proportions is decided upon, its success or failure often depends from the very start upon the choice of men picked to supervise and direct the operations. The United Nations were fortunate that the George McNamara Construction Company of Toronto were awarded the contract for building the airport at Goose Bay, and that Mr. George McNamara picked Mr. William Durrell and appointed him as General Superintendent over the actual construction work at

Goose Bay. On the job Mr. William Durrell is more commonly known as plain "Bill". He has no known enemies, but his friends often refer to him affectionately as "Bad Bill Durrell".

The very first thing that had to be done was to fly scouting parties and surveyors into the North to pick out likely-looking locations. We started this task in June, 1941. It is understood from natives and Arctic traders that the Nazi scientific research parties and surveyors had covered the territory prior to 1939.

The planning committee held meetings both in Washington and in Ottawa. Their experts picked out locations in the Arctic regions which would be most suitable from a technical point of view for their requirements. Radio experts wanted direction-finding stations placed here; they wanted meteorological stations placed there; they wanted W/T stations somewhere else. They pin-pointed the charts at the point these various stations should be placed theoretically to give the most accurate and satisfactory results. The surveyors and their staffs, flown by experienced bush pilots, flew in and photographed the tentative locations and after making a quick preliminary survey, reported back. If the location picked in theory was not practical from a constructional point of view, then another spot had to be located which was suitable.

Accurate weather forecasts are to aviation what light houses, radio-direction-finders, fog signals and accurate storm warnings are to mariners. Meteorologists had therefore to pick out the best locations in which to establish observation posts throughout the Arctic. Storms brew in the North. Detailed information, collected from widely separated points north of the Arctic Circle and from locations near the poles, when transmitted quickly by W/T to the meteorological experts attached to "Operations" at each air base meant greatly improved long-range

weather forecasts. Accurate weather forecasts have saved many lives. A large number of men had to be specially trained and selected to serve at these isolated wireless and weather observation posts. Good men are required to stick it out for periods varying from twelve months to sometimes three years in a little shack in the wind-swept Arctic, with only three other men for companions.

Meteorology is the science which treats of the various atmospheric phenomena included in the word "weather". The Meteorological Department of the British Board of Trade was established in 1855. The system of issuing storm warnings was started in 1861. The importance of studying the weather was always recognized by mariners and it is indispensable as far as safe flying is concerned. The daily weather forecast forms part of every day's newspaper intelligence. People read the daily weather report religiously and they pick their outings and plan their recreational activities on the weatherman's advice. If he happened to be wrong, as he sometimes was on rare occasions, it was probably due to the fact that there were no weather observation posts scattered throughout the Arctic in those days.

Opening up the Arctic and the establishment of radio stations in heretofore inaccessible locations, also helped the Anti-Submarine Branch of the Allied Navies. After long years of experimentation the scientists have at last found a method by which they can track down and keep tab on submarines as they prowl around the oceans seeking their prey. This method is extremely hush-hush, but opening up the Arctic territories assisted materially in aiding the Naval Special Branch of Anti-Submarine Warfare to break the back of the Nazi U-boat campaign in 1943.

Another great problem which had to be solved successfully was elimination of radio static in the northern

zones. Radio transmission was very difficult and reception was exceedingly bad. In order to make flying safe, a solution to the problems had to be found, and was found. In one instance it meant stretching copper aerial wire three miles in a perfectly straight line at a definite angle to the earth's axis.

While all this preliminary work was being "licked into shape", Eric Fry, one of President Roosevelt's sons, and several others, left quietly in June, 1941, on scouting and exploration trips into the Canadian Arctic. They couldn't have gone by plane if it hadn't been for the knowledge and experience gained by our explorers, "Bush Pilots", and white traders during their travels in the Arctic.

CHAPTER 3

Snogoose

*The author is appointed Senior Naval Officer
at Goose Bay.*

ONE day early in June, 1943, I walked out of N.S.H.Q., Ottawa, after receiving my instructions regarding my duties as Senior Naval Officer, Goose Bay. A young Wren on the Signal Staff at headquarters suggested "SNOGOOSE" as the code word for signals and it was accepted as official. Arrangements had been made for me to fly into Labrador with my Coder, named Abbott, from Dorval. A few days were spent in Montreal interviewing the Naval Control Service Officer, Department of Transport Officials, the Controller of Transport, and others. One evening I received word from the Traffic Manager at Dorval that my plane would be leaving at 1800 the next morning.

A soft summer breeze swept gently across the beautiful greensward of the airport when I arrived to check in. A mauve and purple haze hung over the distant hills. The drone of planes warming up their engines made one think of them as gigantic bees impatient to be off and enjoy the freedom of the skies. The sun was just stretching itself over the horizon smiling a bright "Good-morning!" to the one half of the world which had not as yet been

torn asunder by the violence and horrors of modern warfare.

Inside the Department of Transport Offices the space was crowded. Aviators dressed in the uniforms of many nations were pushing their way here and there seeking information or receiving orders. Telephones rang incessantly. As I pushed my way toward the counter I heard the transport official saying, "I'm sorry, sir. We haven't any more room on the next plane for Goose Bay." He was addressing a civilian.

"But it's imperative that I arrive as soon as possible," the civilian retorted angrily.

"You will arrive as soon as possible . . . and I hope safely," the official replied blandly. "If I put any more in this plane the chances are none of you would arrive."

The atmosphere in the office was getting hot and stuffy even so early in the day. I heard my name called and went over to report.

"What luggage have you, sir?"

"One suitcase and one sea-bag."

"And your man?"

"Same thing . . . we sent the rest of our gear by sea."

"That was considerate of you. Just have your man weigh your luggage . . . then weigh yourselves," the official requested politely.

I called Coder Abbott over and told him what was required and after reporting the weights to the load-clerk we were passed through a barrier into another section.

"Where bound, sir?" a cheerful rotund official enquired as soon as he spotted us enter.

"Goose."

"Your plane is second to leave . . . I'll help you fit your parachutes," he offered, eyeing me up and down.

He was a cheerful soul and after studying my girth and dimensions he hollered, "Hi there, Charlie! We'll

have to adjust a harness specially for this officer. We've got one of the *really big men of the Navy with us today.*" (I am six feet tall and weight 225 lbs.)

I had often been in a plane before but had never worn a parachute. The airport official kept up a running commentary the whole time he was adjusting the harness so that it would fit. Finally he was satisfied and hooked on the 'chute. He explained how it worked. Then he drew my attention to a card attached to the 'chute which was serially numbered. "That's the number of your 'chute," he informed me. "Check it in, and get a receipt, upon arrival. If you don't they'll charge it up to you. If you've got to jump and the 'chute doesn't open . . . just send us a report on that card and we'll see you get another." I knew instinctively when I first saw the gentleman that he was a cheerful little fellow.

Outside the office the scene was really interesting. Planes of many makes and various sizes were parked all over the airport. As I looked them over I found myself wondering at the marvels of applied science. Here they were today. Where would they be tomorrow? In Britain? North Africa? or on their way to India, China, or Russia? Distances didn't mean a thing any more . . . Boundaries had ceased to exist except as thin lines on pieces of paper. I had just finished an early breakfast . . . I was going to fly 1,200 miles and would still be in time for lunch.

Five young airmen dressed in their flying togs emerged from the building and waddled over to a big Hudson bomber. They were the crew of the plane which was taking off ahead of us. They wise-cracked with officials as they climbed into their "ship", bound for Scotland via Goose Bay.

The big-powered lawn-mowers were adding their purr-rr-rr to the drone of the planes. Butterflies were chasing each other around the flower beds. The sweet

smell of the newly cut grass was almost as strong as nicotine. It made me feel drowsy . . . The big bomber began to move. It taxied onto the runway, straightened itself out and then pushed off and began to gather speed. Its engines roared louder and louder. The plane seemed to strain and wobble while trying to lift itself off the cement. Finally it rose—but as it did I saw it wobble and then crash sideways to the ground, hitting on its starboard wing. It went bouncing and dragging along like a wounded bird. Then to my horror I saw it burst into flames. The whole thing happened so quickly it seemed almost impossible to believe one's own eyes.

The sirens of the ambulances and fire-trucks screamed their cry of disaster as they raced madly over the grass, taking the shortest cut to the burning bomber. Hundreds of people crowded onto the freight ramp out of the offices. I saw some little specks jumping out of the side of the plane. They were human beings trying to escape being roasted alive. A column of thick black smoke lifted itself up almost straight towards the heavens. It reminded me of a water-spout forming at sea.

"Hurry! . . . Hurry! . . . For Christ's sake hurry!" I heard one official muttering under his breath. At first I thought he was urging on the fire-trucks but a moment later I understood what had perturbed him. Two more specks hurled themselves from the burning plane and started to roll over and over as they hit the ground. They were smothering the fire out of their clothing and trying to put as great a distance between themselves and the plane before it exploded.

"That's all of 'em." The official sounded relieved and added, "I hope none of those lads are too badly burned."

The firemen were fighting the blaze but soon I saw them withdraw, evidently under orders. There was a

terrific explosion. A huge mushroom of smoke rose and spread itself over the plane. Bright stabs of flame, some yellow, others crimson, burst through the pall of smoke. An awe-inspiring pyrotechnic display followed as the ammunition, flares, rockets, Very lights, and tracer bullets all went off one after another.

Coder Abbott, who had just been trussed into his parachute harness, sidled over to me and said, "I've never been up in the air before, sir. I wonder if they put on that show for my special benefit?"

A few minutes later we were asked to take our place in a big transport plane. We passed within a few feet of the still burning wreckage as we raced along the runway prior to taking the air. It was just another case of "business as usual".

None of the crew were seriously injured. One lad had his hair singed. He wouldn't need a hair-cut for a month.

The big transport plane in which I travelled was one of those which had been ferrying freight and passengers into Goose during the past two years. They had built up an enviable record. Flying under some of the worst conditions aviators meet anywhere, they had not lost a plane, a life or a pound of freight.

The transport planes were far from comfortable. The crew consisted of pilot, co-pilot, W/T operator, and engineer, up for'ard. The two huge auxiliary gas tanks were located one either side of the plane just abaft the for'ard bulkhead. Freight was stowed and lashed on top of the tanks and in the body of the plane right aft to the after bulkhead, behind which was the toilet. The freight was often jammed in from the floor right up to the ceiling. Passengers were a secondary consideration. The number of passengers carried depended as a rule upon the space available and the number of pounds the plane was short of her maximum load after the freight had been loaded.

I have flown in transport planes when there was just enough room left to wriggle from for'ard aft on top of the load. On this particular trip the easiest spot I could pick out for myself was on top of some bags of potatoes. A bag of onions formed a kind of head-rest, while an abundance of flowers flanked me on either side—unfortunately they were cauliflowers and stank horribly. Evidently they were slightly over-ripe and the humidity hadn't helped any.

On that flight I learned something about potatoes I never knew before. It seems that no matter how I tried to arrange the tubers before I sat down, they seemed adept at shifting themselves around until one located itself under the exact position where my tail would have been had it not been for the progress of evolution. The journey down the St. Lawrence was smooth and interesting, but once we headed inland and climbed over the mountains, the going was decidedly bumpy.

I have never had the slightest inclination towards air-sickness so the bumpiness didn't particularly worry me, except that the Gremlins saw to it that whenever the plane fell away and then came back up suddenly, the potatoes connected with my posterior in a most disconcerting and emphatic manner.

Once we were well inland the country grew wilder, and more barren. There was very little vegetation and what we saw was located in the river valleys. It gave one a strange sensation, flying for a thousand miles without once sighting signs of human habitation.

"Why these 'chutes?" I thought. "If one jumped and survived, where would one go?" I noticed on other flights I made from Goose that experienced fliers rarely ever wore their 'chutes. They took them along in the plane, and kept them handy, but they seldom wore them. It was a generally accepted policy for aviators flying over

barren country to stay with the plane if there was even the slightest hope of making a half decent forced-landing. If they survived the crash they had provisions, fuel, and equipment which enabled them to make camp, and live until rescued.

Smoking was not allowed amongst the freight in the rear of the plane, but the crew invited all the passengers for'ard one at a time to enjoy a smoke. As most of the other passengers didn't seem to want to smoke, I spent considerable time for'ard. The Gremlins had been so busy placing the potatoes where they hurt most that it gave both them and me a rest. I liked Abbott right from the start. Once we were in the air he curled up like a cat and went to sleep. The only time he showed signs of life was when the co-pilot crawled aft and suggested sandwiches and coffee, then Abbott was right in there "pitching", as the saying goes.

As we flew across the boundary between Quebec and Labrador the wireless operator pointed out Cheeseman Lake, and told me the story of how Sergeant Hogan of the Newfoundland Rangers, and three others, had jumped from a plane while being flown from Goose to Gander.

The incident had happened about a month before I flew in to Goose. Tommy Mahon, a pilot, was flying a transport plane from Goose to Gander. In addition to freight he had as passengers Sergeant Hogan and several air force ground-crew, going on leave. The weather was cold. The snow was still on the ground, and the plane heater had gone on the bum.

They flew into some dirty weather and the pilot climbed to try and avoid it. The higher he went the colder it grew and the passengers began to feel pretty miserable. They had neglected to provide themselves with proper flying clothes.

The engineer of the transport plane finally succeeded in fixing the heater. The only trouble was, that for some reason it began to smoke as if the plane were on fire.

It is quite evident that one of the passengers was a nervous individual because he rushed aft yelling, "The plane's on fire! Jump!"

Suiting the action to the word he opened the side door of the plane and plunged into space. He set such a fine example of speed that before the crew of the plane could interfere Sergeant Hogan and two other air force personnel followed him. As the horrified crew looked down they saw two men hurtling to their deaths. Either they had forgotten to pull the cords or their 'chutes had failed to open. The other two were swinging gracefully downwards towards the clouds, but where would they land?

The navigator fixed the position. It was just on the coastline of Newfoundland opposite Belle Isle. A more desolate and God-forsaken place it is hardly possible to imagine. There was nothing they could do about it except report it upon arrival at Gander, so that a search could be organized.

"Nothing has been seen or heard of them from that day to this," the navigator informed me.

Strange to relate Hogan and one other man did survive. I met the Sergeant at Goose Bay after he had recovered from his experience. From what he told me, and what I learned from other Rangers, the story of how Hogan stuck by the airman and carried him out to safety in forty-eight days is, in my opinion, one of the greatest epics of the North.

Hogan said that after he landed he saw no trace of the other men. It was nearly dark, so being an experienced bushman he got busy and made camp for the night. He had a knife, some matches, and the parachute silk in

addition to his ordinary clothing. There was plenty of snow on the ground so he made himself comfortable for the night. Next morning he was up bright and early. Luck was with him. He caught a rabbit in one of the snares he had set the night before—the snare being made from cord off the 'chute. He knew he had nearly a hundred miles to travel to the nearest settlement so he set off, deciding to save the rabbit until he made camp that night. That would save at least one match. He realized matches were going to be mighty scarce before he was out of danger.

Hogan had hardly been on the trail more than an hour when he came across footprints in the snow. He knew they must be the trail of one of the men who had jumped from the plane. To Hogan's experienced eyes it was plain to see that the man was almost all in. He was staggering from side to side and dragging his feet in the deep snow. Every now and again he had fallen.

Hogan, due to his experience in the bush, knew that he had his work cut out to save himself. He had at least ten days' journey over the snow and only one rabbit stood between him and starvation. If he was unlucky and couldn't catch others, he had to limit himself to not more than one pound of meat per day. Even that ration might leave him hungry the last few days.

But Hogan couldn't bring himself to push on and leave that other inexperienced man to perish. He decided he would back-track him and take him along.

When he found him the man was in a pitiful condition. His feet were badly frozen. He had been staggering around blindly all night trying to keep from freezing to death. Hogan made camp and did his best to save the man's feet. Frozen limbs so often end up with gangrene. Then the only cure is amputation. Hogan thawed out the frozen limbs and worked on them to restore circulation

gradually. He was partially successful. He set some more snares before he turned in for the night.

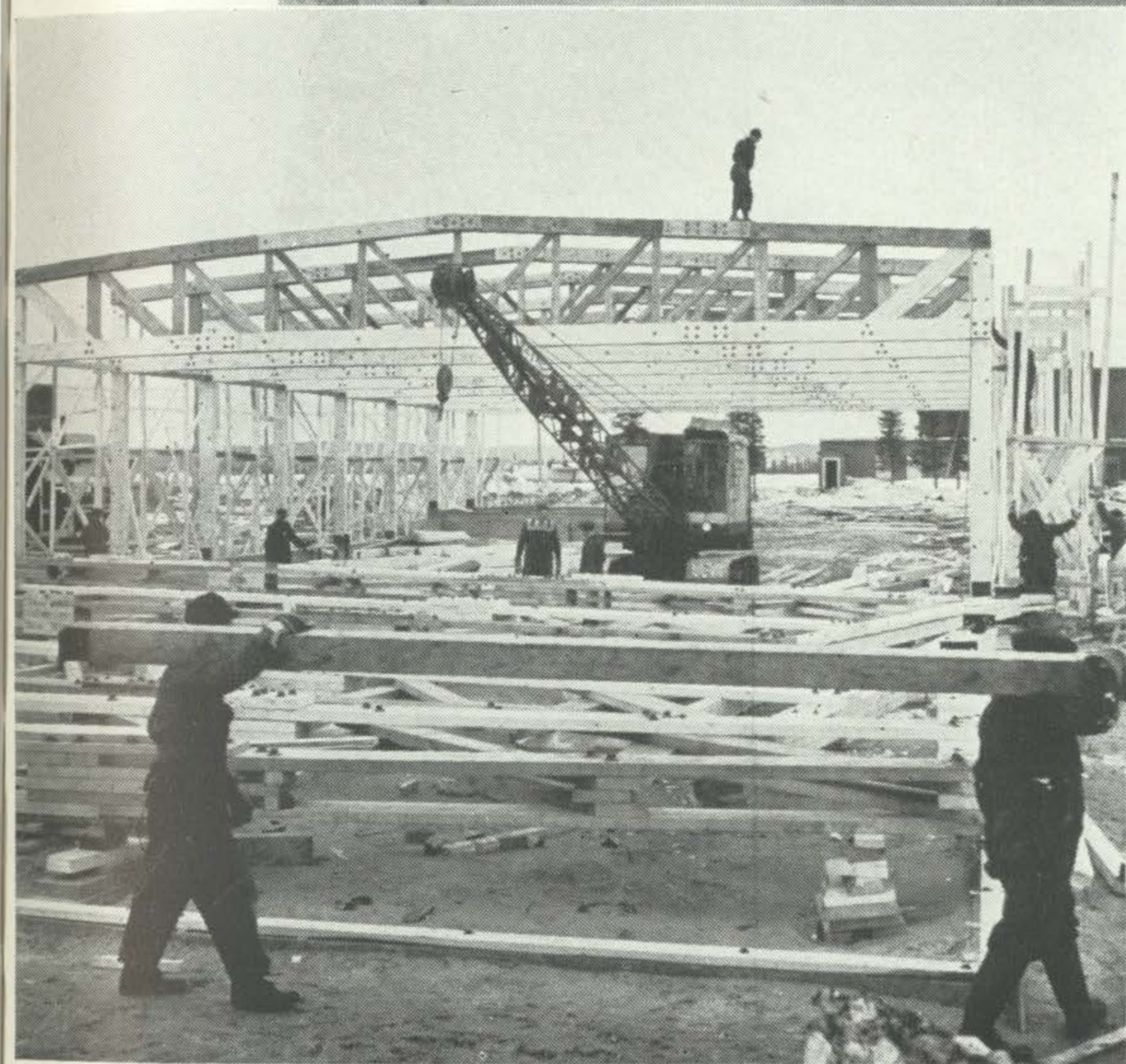
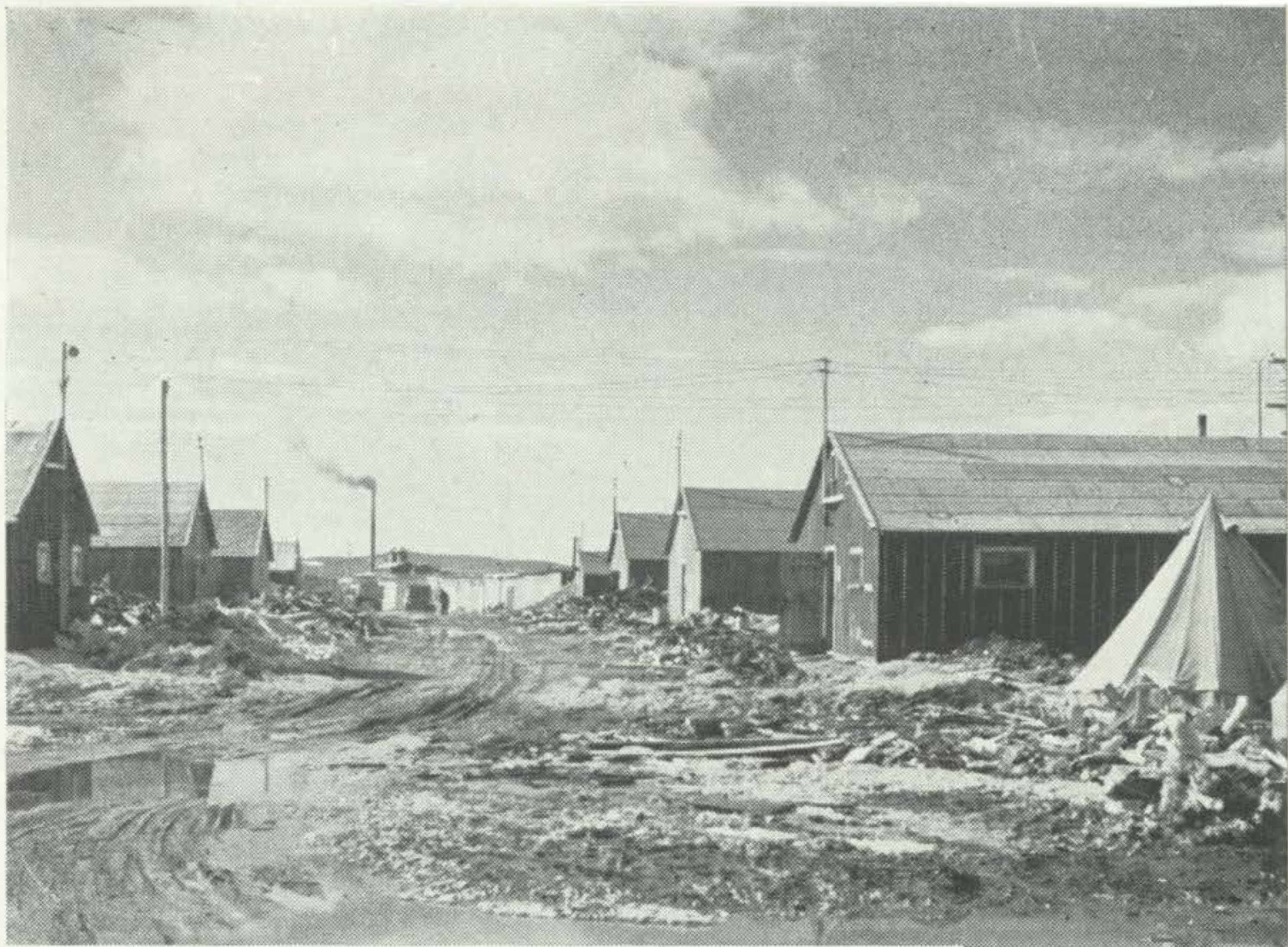
Next morning he had caught another rabbit, but his companion could hardly walk. Hogan had to help him along. The going was very, very slow. They encountered snow-storms and blizzards. Hogan's companion grew weaker. His feet finally became so painful that he couldn't bear to put them down on the snow.

The Ranger made snow-shoes out of the rabbit skins, using the cords of the parachute and branches of brush for the frames. Having fashioned his crude snow-shoes he hoisted the crippled airman on his shoulders and carried him along.

Hogan is a powerful man. He weighed 220 pounds when he jumped. He was as much at home in the bush as an Indian. He knew all the tricks. Alone he could undoubtedly have made civilization without great difficulty, but he just couldn't bring himself to desert his helpless companion. Carrying along the crippled airman caused the journey to take forty-eight days. Hogan only weighed 145 pounds when he ultimately reached a fishing village on the Newfoundland coast.

It takes a lot of stamina and courage to stay behind and carry a man when one's strength is so spent that one can hardly drag one foot ahead of the other. But Hogan is made that way. When the Ranger became too weak to carry his companion he improvised a sledge, made a harness and dragged him along.

Time and again the Sergeant must have been tempted to push on alone, with the intention of sending back help to his unfortunate companion. But he knew that the man would have died had he been left alone in the solitude of that northern wilderness . . . so the Ranger stuck with him. Finally, after one month and eighteen long, weary,



(Top) Construction Camp; (bottom) Building a hangar at Goose.



(Top) Docks and Terrington Basin; (centre) Defence Force marching past Saluting Base; (bottom) Ships unloading at famous docks built in three weeks.

pain-racked days he staggered towards the coast and looking over a cliff he saw a fisherman's shack.

His joy can well be imagined when he saw smoke curling from the chimney and knew the shack was occupied. That thin wisp of smoke meant all the difference between life and death. He had remained loyal to his companion. He is a credit to the Newfoundland Rangers.

Hogan made a complete and speedy recovery. He was promoted for his devotion to duty. The airman lost a foot, but his life was saved. At the time the navigator of the plane was telling me the story of the jump, Hogan was somewhere beneath us, trudging along, carrying his companion, mile after weary mile. The R.C.A.F. at both Goose and Gander had given up hope that he could possibly be alive. Without chart or compass his only hope was in the mercy of God, and his only guide the stars. And yet after it was all over Hogan could sit around the stove and say, "It was a damn good job those eight rabbits I caught were in good condition. If they hadn't been, the pickings would have been pretty poor when we got down to eating the ribs." The eight rabbits allowed the two men a ration of one and one-third pounds of meat between them, each day.

Abbott and I arrived at Goose Bay Airport on time. By the most extraordinary freak of Fate another Hudson crashed and burst into flame soon after our arrival. It was the first serious accident at Goose Bay in six months. Fortunately the crew escaped with only slight burns in this case also.

"Now I know they're putting on these shows for my special benefit," Abbott informed me as we stood watching the efforts of the fire-fighters to save the plane. We were standing a good deal nearer to this plane than we had been to the one at Dorval. Suddenly the fireworks started popping. The Commanding Officer gave the order:

"Everyone stand clear." The firemen reluctantly withdrew. They were just in time. The explosion was simply terrific. When the flames had burned themselves out there was little left but scorched metals.

These two accidents made me realize that aviation still has its hazards at home as well as on the fighting fronts.

Thousands of planes of every type used by the Allies to win air supremacy throughout the world, took off from the airport long before I terminated my period of duty as Senior Naval Officer, Goose Bay, in the fall of 1943. Impressive records had already been set up in the annals of flying history, particularly by the United States Army Air Force and the Atlantic Ferry Command.

In a twenty-four-hour period during the summer of 1943 one hundred and fifty bombers took off for overseas. While enjoying a smoke after dinner one evening, I counted over seventy planes circling the field prior to landing. On another occasion bad flying conditions over the United States and Canada had caused hundreds of bombers waiting to be flown overseas to remain grounded. When the weather improved so many planes arrived at Goose Bay in two days, that Colonel Montague, the officer who relieved General A. D. Smith, Commanding the U.S.A.A.F. Section, jocularly remarked, "If any more come in tonight we'll have to park them one on top of the other." That night the culinary department, the staff looking after accommodation and operations, to say nothing of the personnel in the Control Tower, all went nearly crazy. Three thousand transients had to be fed and looked after. To complicate matters the first flock of women pilots blew in. They were finally "salted down" in the hospitals.

Next morning I stood in the Control Tower and watched eighty-seven bombers take off in eighty-nine

minutes. They taxied onto the runways and took off at regular one-minute intervals, without the slightest hitch. As they rose into the air at the end of the runway, one bomber would circle to the right, and the next to the left, before they straightened away and headed east for their overseas destinations.

The drone of planes coming in or taking off was almost continuous, night and day. Pilots leaving Goose in the evenings would be in Scotland next morning, and in Russia, Egypt, or India a few days later.

Few people realize that Goose Bay Airport is only a link, although perhaps the most important link, in what is known to official circles as "The Arctic Project".

The Arctic Project called for the establishment of radio stations, and meteorological observation posts in the most strategical locations throughout the Canadian Arctic wilderness. From Goose Bay, engineers and surveyors were flown to supervise the construction of Arctic airports at Fort Chimo, Churchill, Southampton, Baffin Land and other airports in Greenland, etc. It was from this Labrador base that the Department of Transport of the Canadian Government, working in close co-operation with the United States and Canadian Navies, directed the convoys of merchant ships which took in the supplies and construction materials required for building these numerous stations. It was from Goose Bay that the Canadian Government ice-breaker *N.B. McLean* took meteorological observers and radio-operators up north to isolated posts, where they had volunteered to spend fifteen months completely cut off from civilization in order that accurate weather forecasts could render trans-Atlantic flying safe.

In the first years of the war, passengers and crews in planes taking off from Newfoundland for Scotland had to face many hazards and take grave risks. They ac-

cepted these dangers cheerfully because of the seriousness and urgency of the general situation. It is easy to recall the news reports that recorded the deaths of such outstanding public men as the Duke of Kent, and Dr. Banting of insulin fame, to mention only two. The United States, Canada, and Great Britain, as the result of flying accidents, lost many other great men who were outstanding in their particular line of endeavour, famous financiers, great engineers, high military and naval officers, all of them men whom it was found hard to replace.

Some of these accidents were due to mechanical defects. A few may have been caused by acts of sabotage. Most of the fatal accidents were undoubtedly due to bad weather encountered en route. Blinding blizzards; shattering electric storms; icing conditions, which forced planes down into the angry Atlantic waves; fogs which shut out landing fields and caused planes to crash when they ran out of fuel; heavy cloud formations and low ceilings which hid jagged mountain tops in Greenland and Iceland; extraordinary static conditions and atmospheric disturbances which made instrument flying unreliable if not impossible; all these claimed their quota of victims.

I recall the time two trans-Atlantic planes crashed within a week of each other. Both carried over twenty passengers. In the crew of one of them was my wife's brother-in-law, Bert Oliver, flying as a civilian with the Ferry Command. He was over forty years of age and had made many crossings under war conditions before he was killed. The following week the Duke of Kent was killed.

During the early days of the war, most trans-Atlantic planes were flown by skilled civilian pilots employed by the now famous Ferry Command. By 1943, due to improved conditions, hundreds of planes were being flown both ways across the Atlantic by pilots of the R.A.F., the

R.C.A.F. and the U.S.A.A.F. Ferry Commands. During the summer of 1943 while at Goose Bay I met several of the women pilots employed by the British Ferry Command. They had been over to Canada and the U.S.A. on leave after completing twelve months overseas ferrying planes from factories to R.A.F. bases in England. These girls were expert pilots. They were qualified to fly almost any type of plane used by the R.A.F. Some returning to England, after completing their leave, flew as co-pilots, others themselves piloted huge bombers across.

Before a plane takes off for a long-distance flight, a conference is held in "Operations". The meteorologists inform the Captain of flying conditions at the point of departure and surrounding areas. The conditions a plane will experience upon her arrival at her overseas destination is obtained by wireless. It was the lack of knowledge regarding the conditions which might be encountered between these two points that invariably caused all the trouble.

Great satisfaction was felt by all those men, both civilians and men in the armed services, who took an active part in completing the vast Arctic Project, because of the fact that in three years they cut the losses amongst trans-Atlantic fliers from over 7% to less than 1%. In addition to saving the lives of hundreds of able and highly trained aviators, they prevented the loss of dozens of costly machines. Their work enabled the Allies to deliver bombers and fighting planes overseas to both Russia and Britain in such ever-increasing numbers and with such regularity that indisputable command of the air was gained by the United Nations in the European theatre of war before the middle of 1943.

Before the Arctic Project was completed and the necessary meteorological data began to come in from the numerous stations already referred to, weather patrols

were flown by specially qualified crews carefully chosen from the United States and Canadian Air Forces. While serving as "Snogoose" (as I was nick-named by the coding and signals staffs at N.S.H.Q.) I was privileged to fly thousands of miles in both American Mitchel B-25s and Canadian Cansos while they were engaged on weather and ice patrol duties. The detailed story of these flights is told in another chapter.

The importance of accurate meteorological forecasts, as related to flying and other naval and military operations, cannot be better emphasized than by the fact that Germany established such stations in Greenland during the present war. She also used many of her submarines for reporting weather conditions off the Atlantic seaboard and in the sub-Arctic waters.

How often people have asked, "What good did Arctic explorers do by risking their lives trying to reach the North and South Poles?" All the men whose names are on the long list of famous Arctic and Antarctic explorers, such as Henry Hudson, Franklin, Frobisher, Perry, Scott, Shackleton, Bernier, Sir Hubert Wilkins, Amunsden, and Stefansson, to mention only a few, made contributions of the greatest value to science in addition to charting and mapping the more remote, and until recently, inaccessible portions of the earth's surface in the Frigid Zone.

More recently Canadian navigators like Captain Bernier, Captain Berthie, and Captain Balcom, while taking supplies up to Eskimos and R.C.M.P. posts located in the Canadian Arctic, gained invaluable knowledge and accumulated a vast amount of information regarding weather conditions, ice formations, and Arctic currents which were of great assistance to the officials charged with planning the Arctic Project. The Royal Canadian Mounted Police also contributed their share of valuable

information gained while covering thousands of miles of Arctic patrols.

Famous Canadian bush pilots, of whom "Duke" Shieller, Al Cheeseman, Jack Woods, Jack Hone and Cap. Roy were only a few, risked their lives flying over Arctic wastes gaining information and knowledge which did so much towards solving the problems of servicing and flying planes in temperatures which often drop to 60 degrees below zero.

In order to make absolutely accurate weather forecasts, to cover the period of 12 to 18 hours which is the time required to fly over most of the longer hops, the Meteorological Staff at Goose Bay must obtain data from literally dozens of widely separated observation stations. Each observer must transmit the barometrical readings; the temperature and the humidity of the air at sea level; the type of cloud formations; the temperature of the air at various heights; the direction and force of the winds, both on the ground and higher up; and the weather conditions actually prevailing at the time the report is made. All this information must be sent with speed and accuracy in code.

The meteorologists receiving this information, first decode and then plot it on special charts. They then draw in the areas of low and high pressure, determine the cold and warm fronts, and predict the force and direction of the wind, as well as the height of the ceiling, the height at which icing will occur and the areas in which fog and rain will be encountered all the way across the Atlantic.

As soon as this information is available, it is passed from the Meteorological Department to the Flying Control Room where the pilots of the planes and the Flying Control Officer hold a conference. As the result of this confab the flying plan is agreed upon. The pilot then leaves, and the course he intends to follow and the height

at which he intends to fly is passed in code to all interested stations.

As it is human to err, errors do creep in at times. However, they are now usually detected in time and, should the weather "close down" at the planes' intended destination, it is usually possible to divert the plane to some other landing field before the fuel supply runs short.

Having established emergency landing fields right across the top of Canada, planes intended for Soviet Russia are now flown west following the over-land route from Edmonton, rather than from Goose over the ocean-via-Greenland-Iceland-Atlantic route.

Long before the war, Germany and Russia realized how important a part meteorology was going to play in aviation. Many expeditions, both by land, sea, and air were sent by both countries to explore the Arctic. There was hardly a year between 1923 and 1939 that expeditions were not in the Arctic collecting data, picking up information, and locating suitable sites.

Meteorology is so very important in relation to modern warfare that the Germans have had submarines stationed continually from the ice barrier in the north, to the warm waters of the Gulf of Mexico in order to obtain necessary data. After America came into the war, censor regulations prohibited long-range weather forecasts being published in newspapers or broadcast over the radio on this side of the Atlantic.

The enemy consider accurate weather forecasts so important when planning operations by land, sea, or air, that their submarines engaged in this task rarely gave their patrol positions away by attacking shipping—they left the job of sinking merchant ships to the Wolf Packs. The Germans even resorted to placing submarines between Labrador and Greenland which gave out false weather reports to pilots ferrying bombers. Germany also

established weather observation stations in Greenland during the war. The United States forces bombed them out of existence.

Canada, because of her geographical position, is predestined to become one of the greatest aviation countries in the world, providing we insist upon our rights with regard to aviation at the post-war conferences.

Goose Bay in Labrador, however, is under the jurisdiction of Newfoundland. It does not belong to Canada. As I understand it, the Air Base site was to have been leased from Newfoundland for 99 years, but I am informed that the lease was not signed by October 1st, 1943. The visits of Mr. Howe, Minister of Transport for Canada, and officials of the Trans-Canada Airways to London during October, 1943, to discuss post-war aviation problems, undoubtedly had something to do with this situation. The Governor of Newfoundland visited Goose Bay in September, 1943, just before Mr. Howe and his confreres flew to England for their conference.

Static in the north is very severe. It often seriously interferes with radio transmission and reception. I have known it to be so bad on one occasion that it prohibited radio communication with the outside world for nearly 72 hours. It may be caused by the Northern Lights or the electrical disturbances which may cause the Northern Lights (or Aurora Borealis), or it may be due to some other cause. Science has never as yet been able to explain the Northern Lights, the majestic beauty of which must be seen in far northern latitudes to be fully appreciated. One can never become used to, or grow indifferent to the awe-inspiring grandeur of this great phenomena of nature. The problems arising from static have been studied and practically solved by experts during the past few years.

There are times when the splendour of the Northern Lights is so vivid in its intensity, and so magnificent and

awe-inspiring in its beauty, that Eskimos and Indians, who have lived in the Arctic all their lives, will come out of their tilts and tents to stand wide-eyed and silent. They gaze upwards to the sky with an expression on their faces that artists have tried to translate onto canvas with oils and colours when painting pictures of the Beatific Vision. On a really good night the spectacle is something that must be seen to be believed.

While up at Alexander Lake, located high in the hills to the north-west of the airport, I saw a display of Northern Lights that held Flying Officer Scott Alexander, Flying Officer A. Campbell, Mr. Gordon Bailly and the writer, spell-bound for many minutes. The intensity of the whole display, the fragile beauty of the shadings, and the extraordinary brilliancy of the shafts of light which shot up over the hill tops was a spectacle never to be forgotten. The utter darkness of the shadows in the hills, the soul-stirring beauty of the reflections mirrored in the lake, was so celestial in appearance as to be positively frightening.

Scott Alexander had lived five years in the Arctic while serving with the R.C.M.P. He had been one of the crew of the police-boat which made the Northwest Passage. He admitted that never before had he seen the Aurora Borealis so bright, so intense, and so colourful as it was that night. It may have been the setting in which we saw the display that made it appear more beautiful than anything we had ever seen before, but the reaction we all experienced was that of being transported for a few minutes from this world to a celestial sphere in order to be given a privileged view of the ethereal beauty of Heaven.

The four of us set out from Goose Bay one week-end to try to find this particular lake, which Flying Officer Alexander had spotted hidden amongst the mountains

while he was making a reconnaissance flight some weeks previously. We found the lake high up in the hills nestling in a valley between two mountain peaks, and christened it Alexander Lake.

We were rewarded for our labour, climbing up and over two mountains in order to reach the final valley, by a catch of sixty-seven speckled trout. The route we took on that particular trip into the lake, is no longer used. A trail much shorter and easier to travel was discovered and blazed some weeks later when personnel of the R.C.A.F. cruised the territory to the north of the mountains we had climbed the first time.

Upon arrival we fished from the shores and off a crudely made log raft, until dark. The sides of the lake were well wooded and very steep. From the shore-line, extending about fifty yards out into the lake, the water was shallow; then the bottom dropped away sharply to tremendous depths.

From the eastern end, a point of land extended for half a mile, dividing the lake into two arms. It was on the extreme end of this point we pitched our tent and made camp.

It was completely dark by the time we had cooked some trout and finished supper. The four of us sat upon a log before the dying embers of the fire, facing the western end of the lake. Mutually silent, we were admiring the beauty of the shadows of the mountain tops reflected in the still waters of the lake. The silence was utter and complete. Even Gordon Bailly, the manager of the Royal Bank at Goose Bay, had stopped sucking on his favourite pipe. He held it in his hand. All four of us loved the bush. We just sat there fully appreciating the beauty, the silence, and the complete relaxation such picturesque surroundings give to tired men.

The thought passed through my mind that the lake was shaped as if some gigantic pre-historic animal, while travelling from east to west, had placed its hoof on the top of the side of the mountain and crushed it down by its tremendous weight. The hoof-mark of a heavy horse in the side of an ant hill is just about the shape of Alexander Lake.

I found myself thinking of, and feeling sincerely sorry for other human beings who live their lives amid the noise and bustle of city streets, wearing themselves into nervous wrecks, struggling to make a living in ruthless competition with others who have also developed a dollar-chasing complex. Their way of life so rarely leads to paths of beauty and happiness, but more often to disappointment, sorrow, and to an early grave.

I don't know what the others were thinking. I do know that we were all so thoroughly content and completely enamoured with our surroundings that we felt it would have been a sacrilege to strike a match or speak to break the silence. It is so rarely one can enjoy silence so intense that it seems to be felt comfortingly warm like a cloak wrapped around the shoulders.

Suddenly we heard the splash of a trout jumping after a fly. The spell was broken. "That fellow must have weighed well over two pounds . . . Just look at those circles widening over the lake," Bailly muttered.

The unwariness of a fly—the greed of a trout—was all that was necessary to break the magic of the woodland spell.

As if it had been waiting patiently for this to happen, a loon bellowed out its mournful, raucous call. What a desecration!

We all got up off the trunk of the wind-fall, and made for the tent. Three of us were unrolling our sleeping-bags prior to turning in when Al Campbell called

out. "The Northern Lights are shaping up into quite a display. Come and see them."

Having seen them dozens of times none of us responded to his invitation.

Then Al called again. "Say, fellows! Tumble out! This is something different. I'm not kidding!"

We couldn't ignore the sincere tone of his voice. I poked my head through the flap in the tent and then scrambled out to join him.

The Lights that night were not confined to one section of the heavens as so often happens. The rays shot up over the mountain-tops all around the horizon. It looked as if the beams came from batteries of searchlights located below the horizon and hidden under the curve of the earth. As I watched they began to dance and quiver and grow stronger.

"Alex! Gordon! Tumble out. This is really worth seeing," I called excitedly.

They needed no further bidding. All four of us walked out on the point of land jutting out into the lake to obtain an all-round view, unobstructed by trees.

My impressions written down immediately after I returned to Goose Bay read as follows,

"The rays of light shot up from behind the mountains forming a curtain of flimsy, fire-like beauty. They reached almost to the dome of the heavens. The display was strongest in the north-west section of the sky.

"The shadows in the mountains on the west side of the lake varied in degree from jet black to rich purple. The silhouette of the mountains against the sky was etched as clear and cold as if cut in a steel engraving. The reflections of the mountains in the lake was toned down from black near the shore line to dove grey near the middle.

"As we watched, we found it necessary to turn our heads, at times, in order to miss none of this widely scattered spectacle which lit up the whole sky.

"A perfect circle of light, like a gigantic halo, formed immediately above us in the zenith. From this circle eight equi-distant shafts of light shot downwards towards the horizon. They widened in perfect proportions as regards shape, and in perfect harmony as regards degrees of brightness.

"Then, as if at the bidding of some unseen director, all eight shafts of light gently drew themselves upwards until they were merged again into the halo.

"The next figure was that of a cross. The top section and the arms widened as they extended farther from the circular halo. The main stem of the cross reached down until it was anchored in the rugged mountain tops in the west. We had to bend our heads back to see the head of the cross in the east. The arms reached out north and south.

"The lights which formed the shapes at times were hard and bold, as yellow as natural gold. At other times they softened to the glittering sparkle of cloth-of-gold. Suddenly from the halo, in the four sections formed by the cross, multiple small shafts of light appeared. They varied in length but were perfect in symmetrical proportions.

"This spectacle reminded me of the candle-light I had once seen playing on the bejewelled spikes of the Monstrance exposed in a Roman Catholic Cathedral during Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament.

"The next change caused violent splashes of light to dance across the dome of the heavens, obliterating the last figure completely. Another curtain-like display resolved again into the most delicate patterns, through which ran a perfect ribbon of vari-coloured lights In

appearance the huge semicircle looked like a most beautiful and perfect rainbow except for the fact that the varicoloured lights danced and quivered all along its entire length like shot-silk.

"By this time," I wrote, "the whole heavens were in a riot of dazzling brilliancy made up of such a variety of colours that we held our breath in awe and wonderment. In the perfect silence of that northern wilderness one imagined one heard the crackle of gold lace and the rustle of stiff silks. I next saw a beautiful cascade of light like sparks flying up high from a white-hot metal being forged below the horizon on a gigantic celestial anvil. And then, as if to wind up with grand finale, feathers of shimmering light hung down from the zenith, as delicate in texture as jewelled ostrich plumes.

"The whole heavens then seemed to burst asunder in an extravagant rebellion of light, the very magnitude of which reached new heights of chaotic splendour. This final spectacle paled into insignificance the most ambitious results achieved by man-made pyrotechnic displays.

"And then, just as suddenly as it appeared, it was all finished."

We stood there looking at each other . . . I wondered if the others had seen as I had seen? I felt very humble, very insignificant, very small.

The war-like drone of a bomber's engines, as it headed for the base, was practical enough to convince me that what I had seen was a reality and not a beautiful dream.

What causes the Aurora Borealis? What is electricity? Mere man cannot say.

It is hard to realize that human beings, privileged to exercise their bodies, and steep their souls by looking up at such beauty one night, in an atmosphere of absolute silence and peace, could, twenty-four hours later, be

looking down upon devastated cities in which crippled bodies and tortured minds add their agonizing cries to the noise of crashing bombs and shattering din of anti-aircraft guns.

CHAPTER 4

Eric Fry—Surveyor

The story of the man who discovered the Goose Bay airport site—North West River and the Grenfell Mission make us welcome—Troop ships arrive and the Defence Force is relieved.

TRAVELLING all over north-western Canada for the past twenty years has been a man named Eric Fry. Just what age Eric is, nobody seems to know—and Eric won't tell. Now and again he will let slip some words that refer to an incident he experienced when serving the Empire as a soldier in the last war. Since soon after his discharge from the Army, this man has been employed by the Canadian Department of Mines and Resources, Mines and Geology Branch, serving the Bureau of Geology and Topography, doing topographical survey work. He is Canada's first Aerial Surveyor.

By using aerial cameras in a plane, he covers more territory in a month today than a survey party, travelling by canoe or dog-team, could previously do in a two-year period. Eric is a tall, thin man. He is rather stoop-shouldered; he might easily be misjudged for a man who was not at all robust, yet he is one of the toughest men the north country has ever produced. He is like whipcord. He is all muscle and bone. He can eat six big meals a

day when food is plentiful, and go six days on one meal when food is scarce. He can carry as heavy a pack as the best men, pound for pound and mile for mile.

Quite casually, one night while sitting in Bill Durrell's shack, I heard the following yarn: "Tough? . . . Eric Fry tough? Physically that man is so tough even a polar bear would break its teeth and ruin its digestion if it tried to make a meal off him. He was rushing a survey through last winter up north. His plane was grounded and the survey party got caught in a blinding blizzard quite a hike away from the main camp. The temperature dropped to 60 below. Fry decided to make camp where they happened to be—on some rocky territory not far from the coast-line. The snow wasn't suitable for making an igloo. All his party could do was make a snow-bank and take shelter under an overhanging rock, then climb into their sleeping-bags to keep from freezing to death.

"One of the party claimed he heard it was worth while to heat a rock over the Primus stove and take it into one's sleeping-bag when turning in for the night. It helped heat the interior of the sleeping-bag.

"Eric Fry listened, and gave the suggestion mature consideration, then remarked, 'Well, do as you please, but for me I think I'll sleep as I always do. The way you suggest may be warm and comfortable. Perhaps it would be too damn comfortable. Might so happen you'd want to make a practice of doing that same thing every night. That would tend to soften a man up. You'd be in one hell of a fix if you got really softened up and then one night you couldn't find a nice hot rock to sleep with.' "

In July, 1943, I had the pleasure of meeting Eric Fry. Bill Durrell had invited Eric, two medical officers and the off-duty nurses from the R.C.A.F. hospital at Goose Bay, to go with him in his motor boat while he organized

the salmon fishing at Carter Basin for the summer months. I was asked to go along. Bill had a large family to feed. The two or three thousand civilian workmen employed on the project at Goose Bay during 1943 made an awful hole in a thousand loaves of bread and a ton of fresh salmon when they sat down to a meal. The McNamara staff of cooks had to prepare one ton of meat or fish, two tons of vegetables and 1,500 loaves of bread, to say nothing of pies, etc., in order to provide the men with three square meals each day. These figures enable a person to obtain a slight but elementary idea of the organizing problems to be solved before an army can be moved or a project the size of Goose Bay Development can be undertaken.

Bill had heard from the natives that the salmon had begun to run up the Kenamu River. This river is located about fifteen miles east of Goose Bay Airport on the south shore of Lake Melville. It empties into a little bay filled with sand bars known as Carter Basin. Bill's idea was to hire some natives to fish for him. The construction company were to supply the nets, and the natives to provide their own boats and catch the fish. Bill offered to pay them 10c a pound for the whole of their catch. He was safe on this proposition because the natives could only obtain 3 to 4c a pound from the Hudson's Bay Company for the same fish. Durrell's idea worked and bore fruit. The natives caught from one to eight tons of salmon each week during the season. Salmon on the menu even three times a week wasn't hard to take after the men had been forced to eat mutton at almost every meal for the greater part of a month during the previous winter. I understand that owing to a mistake 30 tons of mutton were delivered, allowing for no variety of diet. According to one informant it was fried mutton one meal, boiled mutton the next, curried mutton the next, and stewed mutton the next. Then by way of variety they

had ragout of mutton for Sunday noon and sheep's head brawn for Sunday's supper.

There was no waste. Bill Durrell saw that the Army, Navy and R.C.A.F. got their share of the catch. What fish couldn't be used fresh was put into the cold storage plant he had built for the purpose during the winter months.

I am sure that many a "tall" yarn has been told by visiting high officials, when they arrived back in civilization, about the nice Labrador salmon they caught while visiting Goose Bay. The truth is that Bill's "Man Friday", named Clayton, usually obtained the frozen salmon from the ice-house and threw it to the visitor so he could say he had caught it himself. The usual pictures were taken as evidence of the fisherman's good luck. Clayton would then pack the salmon in a box with ice and sawdust for transfer to civilization by plane.

And how those workmen did eat! And how they were fed!! The head cook had served aboard some of the finest passenger liners that ever did the world tours in peacetime. None of his assistants received less than \$150 per month in addition to their board and lodging. When there is little if any recreation available during the construction period and men must live and work together in close association for six month periods before they see civilization, good food is an essential. The McNamara Construction Company saw to it that the men got the very best food obtainable and also made sure that it was served just right.

Jim Proctor, who had had many years of experience catering for lumber, mining, and construction camps in Northern Ontario, was the man picked to solve the culinary problems. Jim did a great job. The construction workmen lived much better than did the Officers and men of the Armed Services by reason of the fact that the Construction Company flew in liberal quantities of salad

stuffs, fresh fruit and vegetables. These were luxuries which the Armed Services rarely enjoyed.

While Bill Durrell was supervising the beginning of his fishing industry, Eric Fry, the doctors, nurses and myself enjoyed ourselves taking photos and having a drink. One of the party casually enquired, "What day is this?"

There was considerable argument before it was settled that the day in question was July 1st, 1943. Up north, one day is very much like another. Radio reception is, as a general rule, so poor that it is a rare occasion when anyone will try to pick up a station. Although planes come and go by the hundreds each week, it has seldom been known for a visiting pilot to leave the daily paper in the Officers' Mess. Admiral "Ginger" Evans made history by depositing the Montreal papers on the table in the Officers' Mess when he stopped over for an hour on his way to England to be knighted by the King in August, 1943. News about the war and the outside world is usually one week to ten days old before it reaches Goose Bay.

July 1st is Eric Fry's birthday. Nobody would think of taking the day off because it was Dominion Day. But Eric's birthday—that was a horse of a different colour. Up north matters of that kind assume serious proportions. They call for a real celebration. North of the 55th meridian, Eric Fry is not just a man, he is a personage—an institution.

The actual date having been finally settled, its importance was duly impressed upon everybody's mind by drinking a goodly number of toasts, such as "Good Health, Eric, Old Boy!" "Long Life, Old Fellow!" "Here's How, Old Chap!" Eric is very tall and thin. One of the party insisted on drinking his health to the wish, "Well,

Eric, Old Boy . . . I wish you the best of everything. May your shadow never grow less."

One of the medical officers suggested that we all go over to North West River and call on the Gillards. Mrs. Gillard's baby was the first infant born in the R.C.A.F. hospital at Goose Bay. No sooner suggested than agreed. Off we went in Bill's very comfortable motor boat.

North West River, located at the north-west end of Lake Melville is one of the oldest established Trading Posts in Labrador. It is also the site of the Grenfell Mission. It is the place where large numbers of Montagnais Indians camp when they return from their hunting grounds each spring, to trade fur for provisions and supplies.

There was great excitement upon our arrival. The average person cannot realize how important a visit ranks in the lives of these simple folk who live so very much alone for long periods of time. The northern Eskimo will offer a visiting friend everything he has, including the temporary affections of his wife. All visits call for a community dance or celebration.

Everyone at North West River turned out to welcome Bill Durrell and Eric Fry. Mrs. Gillard insisted that the doctor and nursing sister who had taken care of her during her confinement go up to the house to see the baby. Mrs. Padden, who has been in charge of the Grenfell Mission ever since her husband died several years ago, insisted that we all go up to the Mission for "Tea". When the factor, Mr. Gillard, says, "Happy to see yer," he means what he says. When Mrs. Padden invited us to tea she meant it wholeheartedly. The number of extra people who sat down didn't seem to mean a thing. The school teacher, the nurse, and the maid, all buckled to. It was a grand afternoon—and, of course, the

fact that it was Eric's birthday couldn't be allowed to be forgotten very long.

The ice had not broken up in the lake until June 15th. As we walked along the wooden duckboard path from the wharf to the Mission, little children, dozens of dogs, old men, the only horse in Labrador, and a couple of cows followed us. I heard one of the nursing sisters exclaim, "Land sakes! Look over there! Real grass!" It was the first grass she had seen for over seven months. The industrious natives, living at North West River, have managed to reclaim enough land on which to grow their modest requirements of vegetables. A great deal of credit for the exceedingly fine vegetables grown must of course go to the eight cows and the one horse. The Mission supplied the original seeds and gave the natives practical advice on agriculture.

A greenhouse is used to give the plants an early start; they are "put out" about July 7th and grow very rapidly, owing to the long hours of sunshine during the few summer months.

It was at North West River that Eric had landed by seaplane when he first flew in to Labrador on his original mission, and located the site for Goose Bay Airport. The Grenfell Mission folk made him very welcome indeed. Up there, in the so-called frozen north, the tea-table groaned with the weight and abundance of good things we had found it impossible to obtain in civilization for the past year or more. In May and June, 1943, it was nearly impossible in Canada to obtain potatoes from the stores. Hotels served rice as a substitute with meals. At the Grenfell Mission we had potato salad, pickled beets and tomatoes. We had wild goose, fresh salmon and caribou meat; we had cocoanut macaroons and real date turnovers like mother used to make. We had cakes with

currants and raisins in them. We had as many cups of tea or coffee as we wished to drink.

The explanation is this. They grow their own vegetables at the Mission, and it is not practical to enforce any system of rationing where families buy a whole year's supplies at one time. Many trappers and Indians only visit the Hudson Bay Posts once a year to trade.

After doing our best to eat Mrs. Padden out of house and home, we called in at the Gillards to see their famous baby. Notwithstanding the fact that we had only just finished having tea with the Mission folk, we had to have a couple of drinks just to give us a "Wee bit appetite for a mouthful of trout and wild goose" with the Gillards.

Mrs. Gillard told us all about her wonderful baby; how much it had gained week by week since leaving the hospital; all its real and supposed idiosyncracies. She had been the nurse at the Mission until she married the Hudson's Bay factor. They seemed to be a very devoted couple. Both their lives centred around that little child of theirs. They seemed to be truly happy and, after all, that is the only thing that really matters in this life.

The sergeant in charge of the Newfoundland Rangers had just arrived from Newfoundland via Rigolet. We gave him passage to Goose Bay. The Rangers are a similar body of men in Labrador to the R.C.M.P. in Canada. They perform the same duties.

Leaving North West River, we headed for the Canadian Government ice-breaker *N.B. McLean*. We just simply had to call and see the ship's doctor, that famous old personage, Doctor MacCombe. He is undoubtedly one of Nature's own gentlemen and one of the world's most generous hosts. Naturally Captain Balcom, O.B.E. who commanded the *N.B. McLean*, also had to be acquainted with the fact that it was Eric's birthday. He responded in accordance with the usual custom.

The *N.B. McLean* was anchored just outside the bar at Sandy Point, Goose Bay. Captain Balcom had done splendid work with her, bringing into Goose Bay supplies and machinery during the fall of 1941. He was awarded the O.B.E.

Doctor MacCombe, after serving for many years, had just retired as Medical Officer of Health to the Canadian National Railways.

"I just couldn't sit down during wartime and do nothing," Dr. MacCombe explained in his quiet refined voice. He added, "I thought by serving aboard the *N.B. McLean* up in the Arctic this summer, I'd release a younger man for more active duty." Dr. MacCombe must be well over seventy but he is a well-preserved man. His courage is typical of the spirit of the men who go forth to battle the elements.

On July 1st, 1943, our party was happy and friendly, sitting in the comfort of the Captain's cabin. The *N.B. McLean* was waiting at Goose Bay until the ice up north in Davis Straits was ready to release its strangle-hold upon the Arctic harbours. A few weeks later, the ship was bucking its way into fields of ice and fighting to clear a passage for the thirty-five ships of an American convoy which carried the stores, equipment, and materials required by the men who were on their way to build the final links in the vast Arctic Project. The Arctic Project will be dealt with later.

Shortly after we boarded the *N.B. McLean*, the look-outs reported sighting the S.S. *Lady Rodney* coming into view around Epinette Island. This ship was bringing to Goose Bay the first draft of soldiers being sent to relieve the air-base garrison. Next, the S.S. *Laurentian* was seen coming into Lake Melville from around Rabbit Island in Goose Bay. She was bringing out some of the troops who were being relieved. These were the men Lord Haw-Haw

had predicted would be starved to death during the previous winter.

It is difficult to describe the joy and happiness of the men of the New Brunswick Rangers who were about to be relieved. They had been up at Goose Bay from the very beginning of the project, living in canvas-covered sand-pits the first winter. The long dreary months of keeping on the alert, when nothing ever happened, had begun to wear some of them down. For twelve months they had manned ack-ack guns or patrolled the tundra and forest surrounding the airport. They were there to see that a well-organized surprise attack by enemy paratroopers could not materialize and capture the airport. Some of their number had gone insane due to the loneliness and monotony of their lives. Two others are reported to have committed suicide.

Many of them had children they had never seen back home in Canada. Two of them had married native girls while in Labrador and were taking their brides back with them.

There was great excitement. Bands played; wise-cracks were made back and forth about Goose Bay by those who were being relieved to those who were relieving them.

"What kinda place is it, Buddy?" one new arrival called.

"Finest place you ever dreamed of, pal. Nothing to do all day long 'cept drink beer in the summertime and hot toddies during the winter . . . The Sergeant tucks you in bed every night and brings yer breakfast along in the mornings. The native girls are wonderful. They even do yer washing for yer . . . and everything . . . It's a real paradise, chum. Don't break yer bloody neck rushin' down the gang-plank to get ashore—if you do you won't enjoy the scenery."

Aboard the S.S. *Lady Rodney* we met Captain Roach and Dr. Church, the ship's medical officer. They were both reminded of the fact that it was Eric's birthday. Dr. Church made him a really acceptable birthday present. He gave him two bottles of "Rhum", "To make sure he didn't take no harm on the way back to the base."

Bill Durrell heard that Captain Roach's wife liked fresh salmon. Typical of his generous nature and his untiring energy he immediately despatched his boat over to where the nets had been set that morning. It came back with two beautiful salmon. He insisted that Captain Roach take the first two fish caught that season back to Canada and told him how to pack them in sawdust and ice to make sure they arrived at his home in Kentville in good condition.

I had hoped to hear the story of how Eric Fry had discovered the location for the airport at Goose Bay, but everybody was growing exceedingly happy and it was impossible to direct the conversation into any one channel.

It was a gay party and a very happy one. Everyone laughed heartily when Captain Roach told of his experience during the trip north with one of the new chaplains. He told how the new minister was most democratic in his habits and liberal in his views. According to Captain Roach the ship's Master-at-Arms had found him down in the men's Mess Hall at six bells in the middle watch—shooting crap with the galley staff. When the Master-at-Arms informed him it was against the rules to gamble aboard ship, and ordered the game to stop immediately, his Reverence told him to go places and do things which were more emphatic than polite. Next day he was alleged to have won over \$200 from a group of officers playing poker.

"Take my advice," Captain Roach warned humorously. "Bet with him and never against him. He can roll

the bones and talk to them just like a negro from the cotton fields."

We finally left S.S. *Lady Rodney* and returned to Goose Bay Airport. The trip back was very enjoyable. The party sang songs. There was a good moon and it never really got dark, as the sun only just dipped a little way beneath the northern horizon. Upon arrival we all drove up to Bill Durrell's shack.

The nursing sisters went back to their quarters in the hospital about midnight. The rest of us sat around and yarned.

About one o'clock Bill excused himself saying, "Well, boys! It's tough luck being a working-man. Just make yourselves at home. There's plenty of sleeping-bags for those who don't want to go over to the quarters. I'm going to turn in. My man Clayton will get breakfast for any of you who stay. Enjoy yourselves—Good night!"

One by one the party broke away or turned in. Eric was still very much awake and I was determined to hear his story. There would not be many more opportunities because Eric was getting ready to fly north with Jack Hone on another survey job in Baffin Land and farther north.

By 3 a.m. Eric and I were alone. We went outside for a breath of fresh air. It was a gorgeous night, cool but not too cold. The lights of the dawn hung across the north-eastern sky like a magic curtain of vari-coloured fire. The north-west wind tasted like wine after breathing the smoke-filled atmosphere inside the shack. We lingered outside near one of the anti-aircraft gun platforms. We were enjoying to the full the beauties of the dawn.

"Most poets and writers must be lazy blighters," Eric remarked slowly. "They always write and rave about the glories of the sunset. If they'd ever been up early enough they'd realize a sunset cannot compare with the

beauties of the dawn. I claim there's nothing more beautiful in nature than a dawn like we're seeing this morning. Just look at the colours and those shadows in the hills!"

And thus Eric Fry declared himself a poet. After we returned to the shack Eric lit his pipe.

"I know it's late—but would you mind telling me just how you came to discover Goose Bay air base?" I asked him.

"To tell the truth, Commander, I don't feel the least bit sleepy yet . . . to hear those other beggars snore you'd think they were practising for a hog-calling contest. Boy! oh boy! That policeman fellow can sure call 'em home!"

To a chorus of deep lusty snores Eric told me his story.

"The location chosen for Goose Bay Airport turned out to be the best suited area it is possible to imagine because of its geographical position, its sandy soil which required no drainage, the huge level plateau (which required practically no grading), and its ideal weather conditions and freedom from fog. Out of this phenomena of nature has been developed the largest airport in the world," Fry explained. He continued:

"Gander, Tor Bay, and Botwood air projects, in Newfoundland, were already in operation or under construction when the 'Powers that be' decided that air bases should be located farther north if at all possible. There were several reasons for this opinion and the most important were:

- "(1) The shorter distance between the Labrador coast and Greenland.
- "(2) The allegedly better weather conditions for flying. Fog and heavy gales with rain and poor visibility made flying from Newfoundland bases very uncertain, to say the least.

- “(3) Bases established up north would prove a great help in relieving the congestion of air traffic leaving from western United States.
- “(4) By establishing airports in Labrador and the Arctic, together with the necessary meteorological and radio stations, we could checkmate Hitler’s move to invade the American continent via the Iceland-Greenland-Labrador route.

“On June 16th, 1941, the R.C.A.F. Strannaer amphibian flown by P.O. Fleming, set me down at North West River on Lake Melville. We had been trying to make the flight from Newfoundland for nearly a week but the weather was terrible. When we did finally take off, we had the ride of our lives. We didn’t know the country we were to fly over. The maps we had of the interior of Labrador were mostly marked ‘Unmapped Areas’.

“The plane was heavily loaded; we ran into fog and rain and a low ceiling soon after we’d started; we didn’t know the exact heights of the mountains and, if we had, it is doubtful if we could have flown high enough to clear them without icing up. My pilot decided to fly low. He kept in the valleys between the mountains. We followed rivers leading in the right direction. It was about the bumpiest ride I ever took in a plane. Skimming along valleys just over the tree-tops, between mountains with a very low ceiling isn’t my idea of trying to reach a ripe old age.

“Taking those chances, however, made history and gave Goose Bay Airport to Canada. Colonel Roosevelt, of the U.S. Army Air Force, flew to Goose Bay on exactly the same mission. He arrived a few days after I had finished staking out the area for the new air base. I had already sent in the report of my preliminary survey when he arrived,” Eric informed me.

"We were welcomed at North West River by the Hudson's Bay factor, Mr. Gillard, and his assistant and also by the Grenfell Mission staff which is managed by Mrs. Padden. She is the widow of the late Dr. Padden. He devoted his whole life to mission work in the Labradors. Mrs. Padden grew so devoted to the work they were doing amongst the natives that she just couldn't leave North West River after her husband died. She has been carrying on the work with the assistance of a staff of helpers ever since," Eric explained.

"June 17th, 1941, I spent visiting various locations near North West River which Mr. Gillard and the natives thought might be interesting, but I didn't see any land that looked suitable for an airport site.

"The secrecy of my mission had been impressed upon me before leaving Canada, and yet it was necessary to say something about what I was doing; otherwise I couldn't obtain from the natives the information I required about the topography of the country to aid me in my search. I therefore decided to tell the people I met that I was making a general survey of the whole north country. I told them I was looking for big, level stretches of land which might be suitable for establishing landing fields for aeroplanes at some future date.

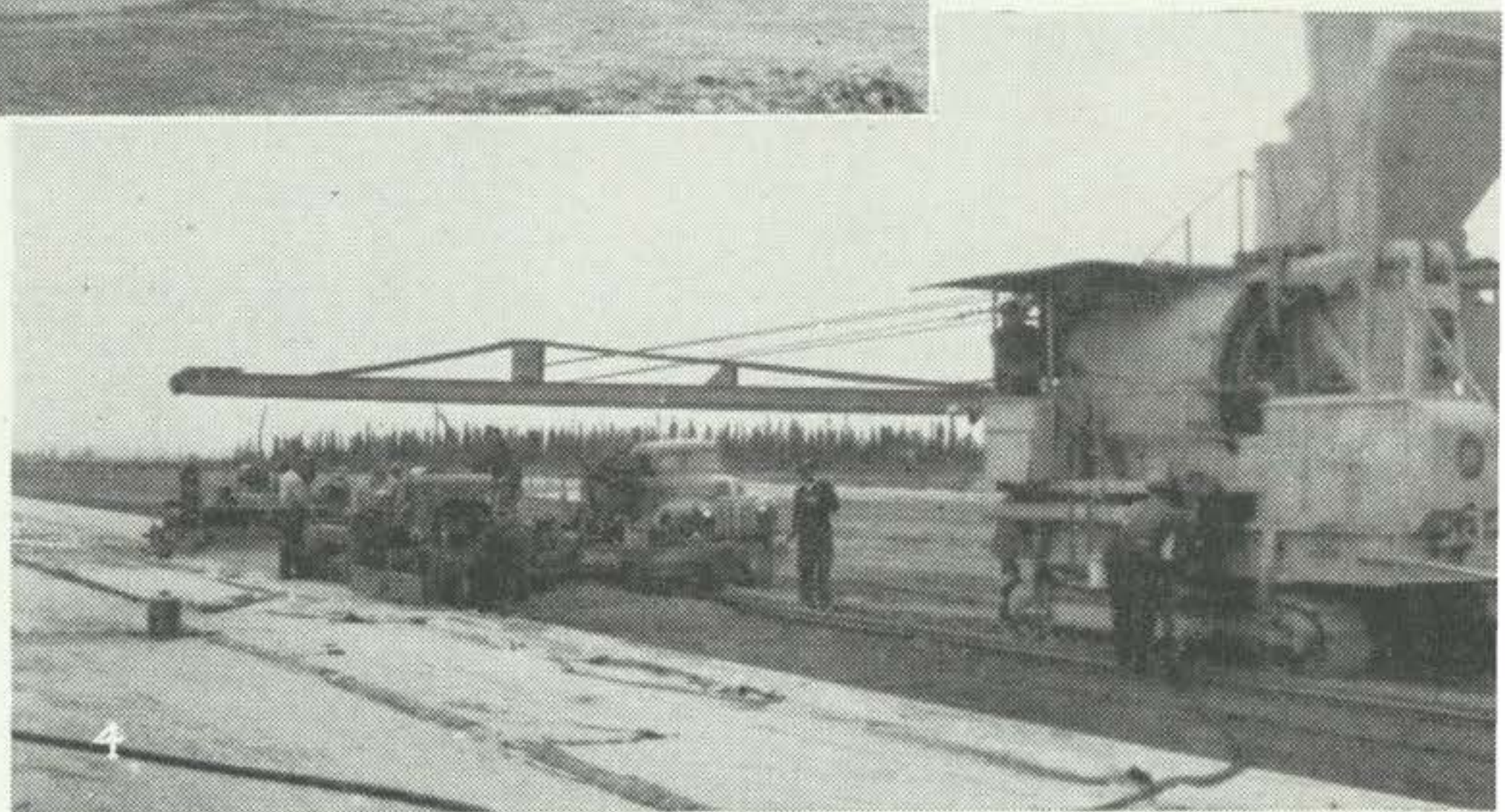
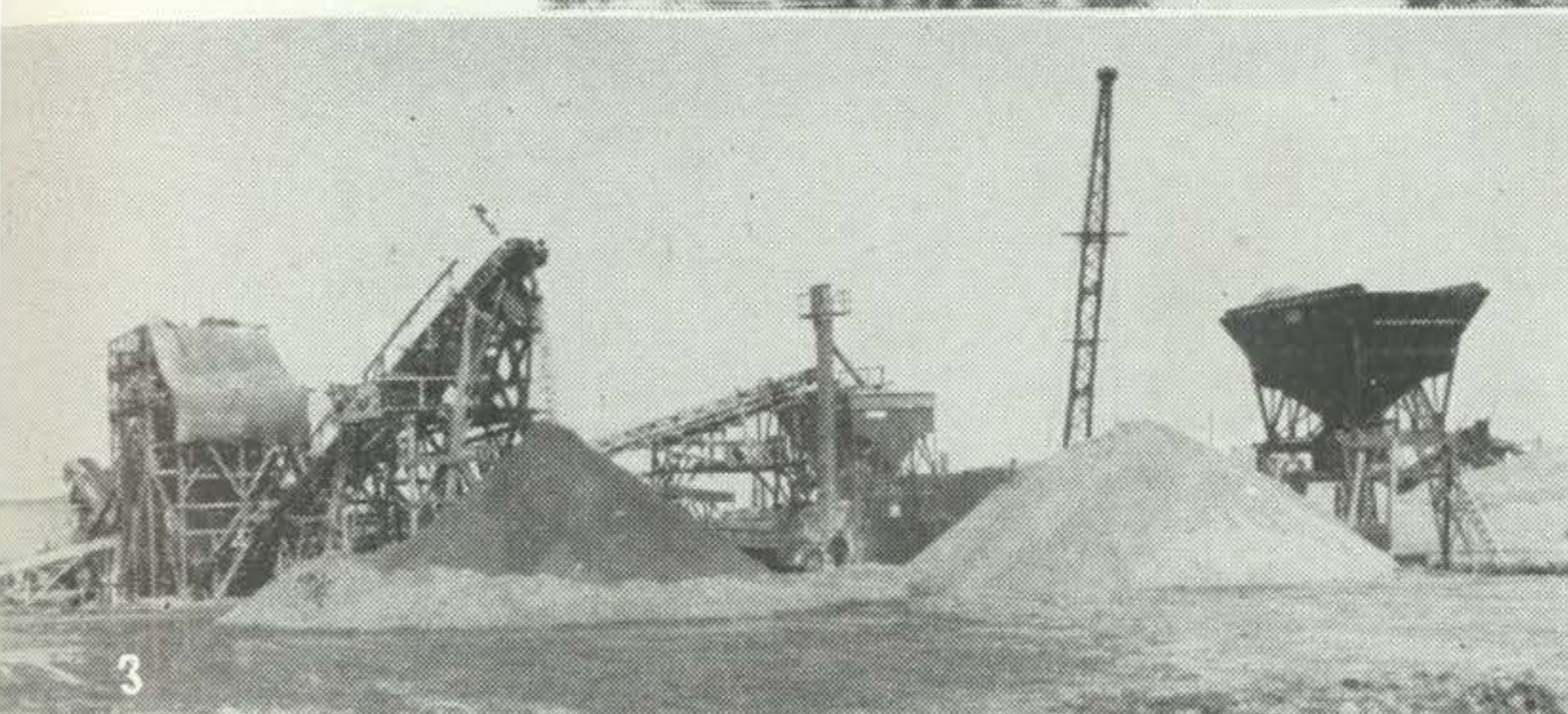
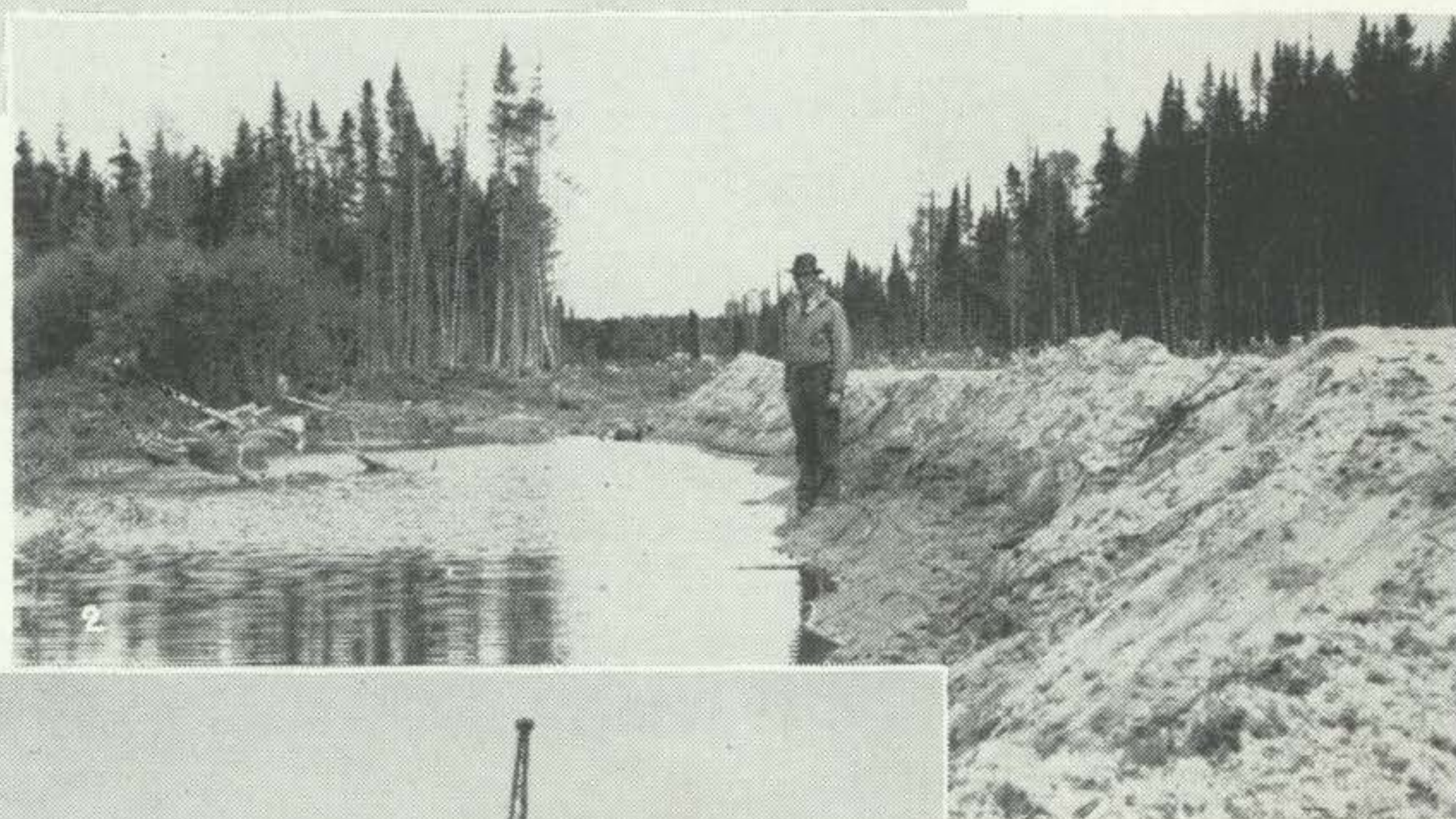
"None of the sites I visited on June 17th proved suitable, so I hired a boat at North West River, deciding to explore farther west. I took Sid Blake along as Captain, and Dan Mickelin as boatman. We set sail for Goose Bay on June 18th.

"The south shores of Goose Bay are low and level. I examined the south side of the Bay that afternoon I went ashore. I found the ground level but wet and swampy. It was full of muskeg and swamp interlaced with deep channels leading into the lake. I saw nothing to interest me," Eric said.

"Next day we proceeded further inland up Goose Bay and stopped off at Grove's Point. Old Charlie Groves lives on the point with his wife and daughter. They tell me he is worth all kinds of dough. He's lived there all his life, made his money by trapping and hunting. He's been very successful as an independent fur-buyer. Very few men have ever made money when they set up in the fur business as *independents* in opposition to the Hudson's Bay Company. Charlie Groves is one of the few exceptions," Fry explained.

"I understand Old Man Groves sent his two boys out to Canada to be educated. One, I believe, is now in the Army and the other in the Canadian Navy. The story is told of how one of the boys, while at college, felt it was foolish for his father to live practically alone so far from civilization, especially when he had money enough to live a life of luxury anywhere he might choose to stay. He wrote to his Dad and asked him to come out to Canada and visit him. They say the Old Man did go out to Canada, but his visit was a short one. He felt so completely lost and isolated in the rush and bustle of city life that he returned to his home on Grove's Point. He claims that a man can be more utterly lost, alone, and friendless in a large city than he could ever be in the Labrador wilderness. Perhaps he is right," Eric commented. "There's something about the North that gets a man. After five years most men want to stay north. The North gets them. It holds them solid as the ice.

"I was standing talking to Charlie Groves in the long twilight, which is the northern night. That's how I happened to see the silhouette of the bluff and plateau which is now the present aerodrome site," Eric explained as he lit his pipe again. "Looking west from Grove's Point, I could see the top of the flat ridge which is located one mile inland from the west shore of Terrington Basin. The



(Top) The boilers Bill Durrell found in the wilderness, after being hauled into camp; (centre right) Bill Durrell, standing on road cleared through swamp; (centre left) Gravel and stone mill operating, where native found gravel near site; (bottom) Making concrete runways.

plateau is about eighty feet high. It stretches from the north bank of the Hamilton River to the south bank of the Goose River. I asked Charlie what he thought of the possibilities of that ridge. He wasn't particularly enthusiastic. The vast sandy plateau was to him only the place where Robert Mickelin had his berry patch.

"Robert had his home at the mouth of the Traverspine River. That's a tributary, branching south, of the Hamilton River, about five miles inland from the mouth," Fry explained. "Every year the Mickelin family went berry-picking to the place they called 'Mickelin's Berry Patch'.

"I decided to investigate the plateau next day. Robert accompanied me up the Hamilton River. We landed on the north bank about two miles west of the Traverspine. He guided me up onto the plateau over a footpath he and his family had worn up the side of the bluff when climbing up and back down again at their berry-picking each summer. The actual "Mickelin Berry Patch" is located on the south-east corner of the terrace upon which the airport now stands.

"I ordered the boat's crew to make camp while Robert and I made a two-hour reconnaissance of the plateau," Eric told me. "We climbed to an extraordinary sandy terrace. It's at least 80 feet above sea-level. It was nearly as level as a lawn bowling-green, and stretched away for miles in every direction. It was covered with caribou moss and small evergreens. I noticed that the trees were held to earth by long slender roots which ran just below the surface of the moss. As soon as I saw the plateau I was convinced that I had found the 'Promised Land' in so far as an air base was concerned. I could hardly believe my luck. I had expected to be away for three months surveying from the air, and had run across a suitable location in three days' travelling by boat and on foot.

"When I landed from the boat I had ordered the crew to set up tents and make camp. I was so pleased and excited with what I had found that I ordered them to strike camp the moment I returned. I think they thought I was crazy," Fry chuckled as he recalled his lucky day.

"We dumped everything in the boat. I could hardly wait long enough to eat. Then we set off for North West River that night.

"Upon arrival I radioed my preliminary report. The next three weeks I spent making preliminary surveys, and levels were run. Sid Blake and Robert Mickelin were always my right-hand men," Eric said warmly.

"The site proved to be a huge sandy terrace or bench extending for several square miles. Bulldozers could level a square mile smooth as the top of a billiard table within a few weeks. The sand was as deep through as the height of the bench down to the level of the river bed. That took care of drainage. The only disadvantage I could see was the fact that the location was over 100 miles inland from the sea. I didn't know at that time how far inland Lake Melville, Goose Bay and Terrington Basin might be navigable. It turned out afterwards that vessels drawing 21 feet could be brought right up to the head of Terrington Basin," Eric explained.

"As the result of my preliminary report, I received a visit from Air Vice-Marshal Godfrey, D.F.C., who was very much impressed by what I showed him. He made up his mind at once. Three weeks later R.C.A.F. engineers arrived by seaplane. I turned over the job to them with a copy of my completed reports.

"The airport is actually located on the plateau at the west end of Terrington Basin, but it is only five miles inland from the narrows between Goose Bay and Terrington Basin. Having a Gander air base in Newfoundland I suggested we call the Labrador site Goose Bay Airport

and the suggestion was accepted. Thus Goose Bay Airport came into being."

That is how Eric Fry told his story. Was it just bull-headed luck or was it the guiding hand of Providence which led him to the site in three days when it could easily have taken an army of surveyors three years to locate another site just half as suitable in the rest of Labrador?

CHAPTER 5

Ottawa Awards Contract for Building Goose Bay Air Base

The United States Army Air Force collaborate with the R.C.A.F.—The details of the contract are made known—The revised plans make Goose Bay largest airport in the world — Bill Durrell, General Superintendent for the George McNamara Company, tells the story of the early days.

THE contract awarded the McNamara Construction Company by the Canadian Air Ministry at Ottawa in July, 1941, called for the building of an air base with two hangars for the R.C.A.F., with concrete runways, three in number, each over a mile long. But before the work required by the original contract was properly under way, the contract was enlarged and called for buildings to accommodate 5,000 officers and men of the Canadian Army, R.C.A.F., and the U.S.A.A.F., in addition to accommodating the 3,000 civilians necessary for doing the construction work. The new contract included two modern 150-bed hospitals, one for the Americans and the other for the Canadians; five more gigantic hangars; modern bakeries; steam laundries; central heating; pump-

ing station; water supply; sanitation; docks to accommodate four ocean-going cargo vessels at one time, as well as administration, operations, and recreation huts, other buildings, stores warehouses and 30 miles of permanent roads.

It called for the building of a city large enough to accommodate a population of from 5,000 to 8,000 human beings. The terms of the contract stipulated that the new northern city be so laid out, equipped, and self-contained that the 5,000 to 8,000 men destined to live in it the whole year round could do their work quickly and efficiently.

More important than anything else was the question of time. The development of Goose Bay Airport had to be sufficiently advanced by the end of November, 1941, to accommodate R.C.A.F., U.S.A.A.F., Anti-aircraft and Military Defence Units. This defence force had to be sufficiently strong in equipment and numbers to handle any attempt the Nazi forces might make to capture the airport and use it in their planned offensive against the United States and Canada.

The construction camp had to be largely self-contained because for seven months of each year Goose Bay is cut off from the rest of the world by ice and snow. From November to June, it can only be reached by air. Such a contract could only be given on a cost-plus basis. A contract of such magnitude is beyond the comprehension of the average person.

This gigantic air project, in addition to being the hub of our Arctic defences in the north-east, was to be the jumping-off place from which both Canadian and United States bombers, fighters, and gliders, were to be flown to England to help flatten the industrial cities of Germany and Italy. Upon the success or failure of the Arctic Project depended, to a very large extent, whether the invasion of Nazi Europe would remain a wishful

dream or become a sound military venture preceding final victory.

When the construction camp, built on top of the bluff near the site, was ready for occupation, 3,000 skilled and unskilled workmen had to be flown in from Montreal or Moncton. A few travelled north on the C.G.S. *N.B. McLean* and the S.S. *Fleurus* in September, 1941, but the majority went in by air. Once the project was properly started, nearly five tons of food were required to feed these men three meals for one day. Four 4,700-ton steamers were required to carry sufficient food from Montreal to Goose Bay just to feed the workers for one year.

In order to store and keep this food in good condition, huge warehouses and root-cellars had to be constructed within the first few months to protect the food from frosts. Electric refrigeration plants had to be built before the next summer to prevent supplies spoiling from heat and blow flies—of which there were millions.

Men cut off from civilization must have some form of recreation and amusements to occupy their minds during their off-duty hours, otherwise they would go crazy. Some did. At the beginning two recreation halls and one movie theatre were built for the Armed Services. Several times each week the civilians had special shows. Ultimately both U.S.A. and Canadian men in the Armed Forces had bowling-alleys provided as well as billiard rooms, and pool tables. The construction gangs and men in the Armed Services smoked more than 4,500 packages of tobacco and cigarettes each day. Several canteens had to be built and stocked and they were functioning quickly.

To make the roads, and haul lumber and materials from the docks to the site, a fleet of one hundred heavy trucks was required. Bulldozers, concrete mixers, pile-drivers, scows, road-graders and scrapers, steam shovels,

clam-diggers, automobiles, all had to be shipped in by sea or else the parts flown in and then assembled after arrival.

Goose Bay Airport covers an area nearly as large as Toronto. One requires a car to travel from one place to another within the area. To make the 50 miles of roads, hundreds of thousands of yards of gravel were required. How a hidden and unsuspected deposit was discovered right on the site is another story of Providential action. Prior to this discovery the contractors thought the gravel they required would have to be hauled from North West River, 20 miles away. The engineers also believed that haulage could only be done over iced roads during the winter months.

A complete telephone system had to be installed; wireless and signal stations had to be built and equipped; masts and aerials had to be erected and rigged; hundreds of thousands of feet of pipe had to be laid and made frost-proof for the heating and water systems; a draining system and sewage disposal plant had to be designed and constructed; baths and showers had to be installed to take care of the men's health; and over and above all this, huge fuel tanks and other storage facilities had to be constructed to hold between four and five million gallons of gasoline and oil. Electric lighting plants had to be installed to enable men to work twenty-four hours a day. Lastly, sufficient coal and wood had to be provided to heat the buildings for seven long, weary, Arctic winter months. Supplying cord wood for fuel kept a small army of lumberjacks employed the whole year round.

Just think of the average city plumber coming to fix a leaky pipe in one's own home! Think of the time he takes to look the job over; think of the time he takes going back and forth for his tools; think of the time he takes to secure the parts and do the actual work and then

imagine what care, thought, organization and planning it required to start the Goose Bay project off with the right foot forward! Bill Durrell told me that the only man he had trouble with during the hectic early days was an over-stuffed plumber from a large Canadian city. He was true to type and the contractor had to fire him in order to get the work done quickly.

The project in itself was prodigious. The fact that the air base was in operation and planes landing and taking off within five months of the site being discovered, is little less than miraculous. This was the considerable problem Bill Durrell was asked to tackle when appointed General Superintendent for the McNamara Construction Company at Goose Bay.

Bill is a rather busy man in civilian life. He is partner in an engineering firm. He is part owner of three large farms in Ontario. He is partner in a canning factory in Haileybury, in which they can their own grown product. In addition to the above-mentioned activities, he is a Consulting Engineer and does a great deal of surveying for mining companies operating in northern Ontario and Quebec. Bill Durrell was the first man in Canada to use commercial planes privately for survey and exploration work in northern Ontario and Quebec.

When George McNamara proposed that he take the position as General Superintendent of the Goose Bay project, Bill told him he would take the job for two months in order to get it properly organized and started. That was September, 1941—but Bill has been up at Goose Bay looking after the job ever since. At least he was still there when I left in October, 1943. Having said he would work on the project for two months, Bill determined to do all he could before the freeze-up in November, 1941.

The Department of Transport of the Canadian Government owns the air base and supervised the construction. Mr. Fred Brown was appointed as the Department's Resident Engineer at Goose Bay. He arrived in October, 1941. The Controller of Shipping, Mr. Tom Lockwood, provided the necessary ships to carry cargoes of stores, supplies, and machinery, from Montreal and Quebec to Goose Bay. Shipping space was at a premium and in September, 1941, only two months remained before the freeze-up came. Before then 19,000 tons of freight had to be safely delivered and placed under cover for the winter.

One night Bill told me the story of the early days. "We scrounged the north country and handpicked our key men. We hunted down men I had known, and located men who had worked with me in the past. We obtained skilled workers from various mines in northern Ontario. I must admit that our popularity didn't increase with some of the mine managers when we took away some of their best men. But this job at Goose was a war job; we had undertaken to complete the original plans within one year, and 'needs must when the devil drives'. At the very beginning, in September, 1941, the McNamara Construction Company shipped up on the *N.B. McLean* sixty of their own best men," Bill explained. He continued:

"I arrived at Goose Bay September 17th, 1941, in a FBY. We made our original camp on the shore of Ter-rington Basin. The distance from the shore to the foot of the ridge on which the airport is built is nearly a mile. It is all swamp and muskeg. The height from the swamp to the top of the bluff from which the level sandy plateau stretches inland is about 87 feet. I surveyed all over the north country before the war. I worked on the survey around Churchill and Hudson Bay before the railroad was put through, but I never tackled a tougher propo-

sition than the Goose Bay air base project," he told me.

"Never have I seen so many mosquitoes and black flies as tormented us that first summer of 1942, in the camp site at Terrington Basin. The professional tortures of the Spanish Inquisition couldn't have thought up anything so damnably irritating, painful, or more perpetual. Out of the humidity of the swamps rose clouds of large mosquitoes, black flies, and the variety the Indians call "No see-um flies". There were millions of huge deer flies that could, and actually did, bite through our blankets and clothing. When they took hold, they bit out a piece of flesh and caused the blood to flow. This torment lasted each year from the end of June until the frost killed them off in the fall.

"Until we obtained cheesecloth and mosquito netting, the men worked with towels wrapped around their heads. They just left space enough through which to see and breathe. The men had to cover their mouths and nostrils, otherwise they breathed small flies into their lungs.

"A road had to be built from the water's edge up to the side of the bluff and onto the top of the plateau. We also had to haul enough fill to construct a road 1,500 feet out from the shore into the water to enable ships drawing 21 feet draught to berth at the wharf we intended to build.

"The officials of the Department of Transport did the final surveys and charted the depths of water in the lakes and channels, but at first we employed natives charting the channels and shoals from Sandy Point into Terrington Basin. Charlie Chaulk, Robert Mickelin, and other natives of Labrador worked hard and were of great assistance with their valuable local knowledge. A pile-driver had to be built and piles by the thousand had to be cut. Only men who took pride in their own ability to take punishment, and scoff at hardship, would have worked as my men did to make ready to unload the

first cargoes which arrived by sea in September, 1941," Bill said proudly.

"Testing showed that the sand near the shore-line continued down several hundred feet. There were areas of muskeg and quicksand between the bluff and the low-water mark. Where all the sand in Goose Bay area came from originally is a geological mystery. Shaped like horse-shoes round these huge deposits of sand are rocky mountains. At the foot of the mountain ranges, at about two hundred feet above lake level, is the first or highest sand-bench or plateau. This bench runs east for half a mile or more towards the waters of the bay. Then comes a sheer drop of about forty feet to another level, sandy plain. This second plateau is rather wider than the highest one. Still walking east towards Terrington Basin one comes to another drop of about the same height. This plateau is over five miles wide and it is the one on which the air base is built," said Bill, explaining the topography of the area.

"Two large rivers flow into Goose Bay, one south, the other north of the sandy plateau. The largest of them is the Hamilton River. The other is called Goose River. It is between these two rivers that the airport is located on the plateau.

"The cargo vessels, allocated for duty between Montreal and Goose Bay, drew as much as 21 feet 6 inches. To build a solid road, from the shore-line out into the Bay, and then construct a dock in twenty-two feet of water, was quite a problem in itself. In places, two seventy-foot piles had to be spliced together. Rarely had we to drive piles less than 100 feet deep near the shore-line in order to obtain a reasonably solid foundation," he told me.

"Skilled lumberjacks cut down suitable trees for piling, and trestle work. Construction gangs laid the corduroy foundation. In summer river-drivers poled or towed logs

down the rivers to where the road construction gangs were working. Everyone worked twelve to sixteen hours each day, including Sundays. In winter everything was hauled over the ice and snow.

"It wasn't very long after the advance party of McNamara workmen had established their camp," Bill said, "before natives from Mud Lake, North West River, the Traverspine River, Otter Creek and Carter Inlet began to arrive. I gave them all employment at standard rates of pay. The only fly in the ointment was that according to custom all brought their wives and families, and their dogs along with them. I can honestly say that before a year had gone by, most of the natives of Labrador from Cape Chidley in the north down to St. Michael's Bay in the south, had worked for the McNamara Construction Company. This was a good thing for the natives because it gave them more money to spend than they had ever enjoyed in their lives before.

"We were working against time. We had to land 19,000 tons of freight before freeze-up," Bill continued. "Lieut. Commander Langston, R.C.N.R., flew in from St. John's, Newfoundland, to look the situation over before the arrival of the first ships. Unfortunately he died shortly afterwards.* The Canadian Government ice-breaker, *N.B. McLean*, was sent up in company with the C.G.S. *Saurel*. They marked the channels, laid out buoys and set up leading marks and other temporary aids to navigation all the way from Rigolet to Terrington Basin. The *Saurel* towed up the crane-barge *Foundation Jupiter* to handle heavy lifts, and to help unload the *N.B. McLean* at Sandy Point bar."

When I was appointed Senior Naval Officer to Goose Bay, I found navigation along the Labrador coast, in through Hamilton Inlet, and up Lake Melville, through

*The author took Lt. Comdr. Langston's appointment at Goose Bay.

Goose Bay and into Terrington Basin dangerous at the best of times. The waters through which the ships must navigate when sailing to the Arctic and Labrador have never as yet been properly charted. The aids to navigation on the coast itself are few and far between. What lights there are, are unwatched lights. Icebergs, strong tides and currents, fog and heavy rainstorms, narrow channels with shifting sand bars, all add to the anxiety of master mariners navigating these waters. In addition, the naval authorities had enemy action with which to contend. An insufficient number of escort vessels were available during 1941-42. From Gready Island inwards to Rigolet the waters are strewn with small islands, rocks, shoals and submerged reefs. Between Belle Isle and Cartwright, fogs were encountered which were so dense that ships were held fogbound for as long as five days at a time. Strange to relate, very little fog is experienced north of St. George's island in Hamilton Inlet. In Lake Melville, Goose Bay and at the airport itself, fog is encountered only on rare occasions.

The weather at Goose Bay is ideal flying weather. The base itself enjoys plenty of sunshine. The number of flying days per month at Goose is almost double the number of days enjoyed at Gander or Torbay in Newfoundland. Last winter, 1942-43, sixteen consecutive days of sunshine were experienced with hardly a cloud in the sky.

CHAPTER 6

The First Labour Pains

How the project is born—Bill Durrell continues his story—The first ships arrive with 19,000 tons of freight and equipment—A temporary road and dock is constructed in three days—A permanent dock and road is built into 24 feet of water in three weeks—Ocean-going steamers arrive and discharge cargo.

THE visit of inspection carried out by Air Vice-Marshal Godfrey of the R.C.A.F., following Eric Fry's initial report, decided the Air Minister, The Hon. 'Chubby' Powers, to build the additional air base in Labrador," said Bill, continuing his story of the early days.

"The policy decided upon was for the Department of Transport to supervise the building and construction of the project and for the R.C.A.F. to operate the base when ready. At first there was no question of the United States Army Air Force being involved, but they did enter the picture and ultimately the size of the project was doubled and the U.S.A.A.F. section became more than twice as big again as the R.C.A.F. The original policy, however, held. Goose Bay air project is definitely a Canadian project. It

is owned by the Canadian Government, managed and operated by the Department of Transport.

"The R.C.A.F. command the air base; the U.S.A.A.F., and the R.A.F. operate their particular sections and perform their duties as Ferry Commands under the R.C.A.F. All branches are working in complete harmony and with full co-operation in all essentials. The Canadian Army with its ack-ack batteries, Bren gun carriers, jeeps, and Rangers defend the area.

"Early in August, 1941, Mr. Flatt, a Department of Transport engineer, arrived by plane with a small survey party and about the beginning of August, 1941, Mr. Sid Bird, Vice-President of the George McNamara Construction Company, A. S. Donald, better known as 'Tab' Donald, and A. B. Holland, Superintendent Engineer for the Department of Transport, arrived to look the situation over regarding shipping in supplies and building materials by sea and by air. On September 22nd, Mr. Fred Brown, engineer with the Department, arrived and took over his duties as Resident Engineer for the Department.

"That is roughly the line-up of experts and technicians which were flown in to attend the details preliminary to the actual birth of Goose Bay air project," Bill Durrell told me with a merry twinkle in his eye and that ever-ready smile of his which is always present when he talks of "his baby". "I arrived September 17th in a F.B.Y. to act as Chief Obstetrician. The labour pains were frequent and very severe," he added humorously, "but the birth was not unduly delayed."

"When 'Tab' Donald and Sid Bird arrived back in civilization the end of August, 1941, they told me all I had to do was to carry a fill out from the shore into deep water. They said there was plenty of sand to make the fill and it was only 300 feet from the shore into 24 feet

of water. Just like that . . . There was nothing to it," Bill said humorously.

"When we actually got started on the job, the advance party working under my supervision found that between low-water mark and the nearest solid land was 1,000 feet of muskeg. Under the top layer, about 3 feet down, we found quicksand that would suck in and bury anything heavier than a Jack Snipe that stood on it. But perhaps it would be better if I started from the beginning," Bill suggested.

"The Controller of Transport, Mr. Tom Lockwood, working in co-operation with Captain E. S. Brand, O.B.E., R.C.N., the Director of Trade Division, Naval Service Headquarters, Ottawa, had wasted no time organizing the shipping end of the project. The C.G.S. *N.B. McLean* arrived off Sandy Point, Goose Bay, at the western end of Lake Melville, the same day I arrived by air. That is, September 17th, 1941. This advance party numbered sixty men. Every one of them had been hand-picked by the McNamara Construction Company. With one or two exceptions these sixty men all remained on the job until its completion in 1943. Amongst this advance party was Fred Headworth, Building Superintendent. Fred could talk the ears off a brass monkey but could get work done as fast as he could talk. Emile Caissey and Fred McLaughlin, who were experts at building wharfs and jetties, also arrived on the *N.B. McLean*. Their task was to bridge the gap between the ships and the shore.

"The *N.B. McLean* drew 24 feet draught upon arrival. She was filled to capacity with pile-drivers, scrapers, tractors, bulldozers and all the hundred and one things that were absolutely essential to begin construction and operations. The first real labour pain wasn't long in coming," Bill told me wryly.

"The *N.B. McLean* was drawing too much water to cross Sandy Point bar on September 17th and remained at anchor to seaward until the C.G.S. *Saurel* and the crane-barge *Foundation Jupiter* arrived and lightened her. Sandy Point bar is twenty-two miles from the airport site.

"It was no good crying over spilt milk. I hired a native boat and went to North West River. This is about six miles from where the *N.B. McLean* was stranded. At North West River, I was fortunate enough to negotiate with Mrs. Padden of the Grenfell Mission for the use of their schooner *Loon*. I also hired a few small lighters. With these proud possessions I returned to the *N.B. McLean*. We started work immediately and loaded the *Loon*, the two lighters, and two surf-boats. We took off the *N.B. McLean* our tents, camping equipment, a small pile-driver, a portable sawmill and what tools and materials we required to start the wharf.

"It was a beautiful day. Not a breath of wind, not even a ripple on the water. Goose Bay shimmered in the afternoon sun like a sheet of glass. It was typical Indian Summer weather. Spirits began to rise. The men began to laugh and joke and indulged in a little horse-play while they worked. Because of the perfect weather conditions, we loaded all the boats down to the gunwales. At 4.30 o'clock that afternoon we set sail for Terrington Basin.

"The *Loon* had the barges and surf-boats in tow. Fortunately we needed tarpaulins ashore and had lashed these down over the cargoes carried in the lighters and surf-boats. A couple of men had been placed in each of the craft being towed with instructions to steer them and look after the cargoes. We were just creeping along. I had seen the chart aboard the *N.B. McLean* but we had no pilot. I figured we could make the narrows at Groves Point between Goose Bay and Terrington Basin without

difficulty. The weather was so fine and the surface of the lake was smooth as a mirror. But it proved to be the calm before the storm," Bill told me ruefully.

"We had no sooner got abeam of Rabbit Island than a sudden squall swept down on us from nor'ard. Night was closing down by this time but with the squall came total darkness—I mean just that—total darkness," Bill said emphatically.

"You know just how narrow and winding the channel is from Sandy Point to Terrington Inlet," Bill explained and added, "you can well imagine just what a predicament I was in. I was in charge of operations and the only instrument I had was a small pocket compass. There wasn't a sailor amongst the crowd of us.

"This was a fine kettle of fish. The sand bars run out one or two miles from both shores into Goose Bay. There is only two or three feet of water over the top of them with deep channels in between. It wasn't long before we were aground—the whole lot of us. The men in the surf-boats and lighters began to yell out for help. They thought they were going to drown . . . they weren't sailors, and even if they had been, I would not have blamed them for being scared stiff. I was pretty damned scared myself," Bill admitted gravely. "If it hadn't been for the tarpaulins we had lashed down over the cargo, the surf-boats and lighters would have swamped. As it was the tarpaulins shed off a great deal of the water washed aboard by the northerly gale and the men, once they recovered some of their composure, baled out most of the rest. The wind and waves literally bounced us over the sand bars off the entrance to Hamilton River into deep water farther up the bay.

"It was one hell of a night! We managed to clear the sand banks off the south shore only to get stranded again on the north side of the bay. I tried to anchor but the

anchors wouldn't hold. I kept thinking . . . if I get ashore twice in the middle of the bay, how in Heaven's name am I going to get through the narrows at Groves Point without swamping and losing everything? It doesn't take a northerly wind long to kick up a dirty sea in Goose Bay.

"We literally bumped our way along the channel leading to Groves Point," Bill continued his yarn. "I kept to the north shore because when we hit bottom the wind and sea helped to float us off again. It is a good thing for us the lake bottom is mostly sand and mud. Providence certainly looked after us that night. I shudder to think what we would have done had we lost those lighters with the precious equipment. As it was we just swept onwards before the wind and sea and finally were swept through the narrow channel which leads from Goose Bay into Terrington Basin. The channel runs between Groves Point and the south shore. It is only a couple of hundred feet wide at the most. Had we been driven onto Groves Point or onto the sand bars which jut out from the south shore it would have been 'nappoo' as far as we were concerned," Durrell explained seriously.

"I didn't know where we were—couldn't see a thing. Rain squalls swept down on us that were more like cloudbursts. It was only when I felt a decided lull in the wind and the waves calmed down suddenly that I realized we must have drifted under a lee. We had. We were under the lee of Groves Point. No time was wasted. We dropped anchor and waited like a bunch of half-drowned rats for dawn to break.

"With first light we proceeded inwards towards the west shore of Terrington Basin. We landed on what looked like the shore, but found it was a sand bank running parallel to the shore. The area between this sand bar and the true shore-line is the swamp to which I have

already referred. It is a treacherous stink-hole, full of quicksand and pot-holes. The bottom is a filthy black mud that has been formed by rotting vegetation. It was filled with dead trees, the trunks of which were buried while the branches reached up like skeleton arms above the mud and slime, reminding one of a scene in Dante's *Inferno*. It was a noisome spot if ever there was one!

"The top of the sand bar was reasonably firm, so we beached the lighters and started to unload them. Three of us decided to try to find our way ashore. The sun came up and it was quite hot. Once we started wading through the muck and slime the stench was awful but finally we picked a trail clear of quicksands and reached dry land." Bill laughed as he continued:

"The shore wasn't a great deal better. Swamp and muskeg stretched inland a depth of one mile all the way around the shore. We found one dry spot higher than surrounding land, and decided to make our camp right there. The frost had not killed off all the flies. Talk about torture! The damn things were either so small you swallowed them or breathed them into your lungs, or they were so big you had to fight them away with an axe," Bill told me humorously.

In reply to my laughter he rejoined whimsically, "All right, laugh . . . Damn it! I'm not shooting any bull. I saw men cough until they vomited and sat down exhausted after swallowing small flies. I saw others actually bleeding after they had been bitten by the big ones . . . you'll find out before the summer is over," he warned me. And I did.

I was to learn all about Labrador flies during the next three months. When Bill Durrell told me his story of the early days it was the beginning of June. The ice doesn't leave Terrington Basin and Goose Bay until towards the end of June. The flies are really at their worst in August

and continue bad until they are killed off by the frosts in the latter part of September.

Bill continued his story. "Well . . . having found a way ashore and a camp-site the next job was to load our pile-driver and portable sawmill onto the raft the men had built. We brought the lumber with us off the *N.B. McLean*.

"God! . . . It was a treat to see the way those men worked. They knew we were on an important job. They knew it had to be rushed through at the earliest possible moment, but they didn't know that Hitler, if his armies licked the Russians, might drop in on them any minute . . . They just worked for the pure joy they got out of licking a tough proposition. The more punishment to which they were subjected by flies, rain, and smotherings in mire that stunk to high heaven, the more they worked like demons. If Hitler was the devil then those men worked as if the devil and all his angels were after them. How they worked those first few months can never be fully appreciated.

"No sooner was the pile-driver and the sawmill on the raft than the men were into the mud up to their waists pushing it ashore. Back they went again for a load of axes, cross-cut saws, and other tools. Then, while one gang was clearing the camp-site and setting up the pile-driver and sawmill, another gang waded right into the muck and carried most of the small stuff ashore on their backs. I had told them that we had to unload a total of 19,000 tons of freight and equipment before the harbour froze over the middle of November, and they didn't waste any time—most of that original gang worked sixteen hours each day. The work was actually organized so that the men worked two long shifts of twelve hours each. This made it possible to work twenty-four hours each day with the tools and equipment we had available. The

men were allowed to rest but no tool or piece of equipment was allowed to stand idle for a single moment unless it was undergoing repairs.

"Fred McLaughlin and Emile Caissey are two of the finest trestle and bridge builders that ever worked for a construction company. They just started in and broke the first world's record right then and there. Quite a number of world records toppled before the Goose Bay project was completed," Bill added proudly.

"That pair of 'dynamite-twins' organized their gangs, and working like a well-trained team; they pushed a temporary road out to the sand bar a distance of 1,200 feet in three days. While they were constructing the trestles and corduroy, Fred Headworth built a temporary floating dock and had it ready to place on the seaward side of the sand bar when the road reached dry land.

"This fine piece of work enabled the gangs to unload the *Saurel* as soon as she arrived with a load of equipment from the *N.B. McLean*. Everything went so well that by September we had the *N.B. McLean* over the bar and safe alongside the wharf in Terrington Basin.

"No sooner were the first ships unloaded than the men went to work getting ready for the others which were scheduled to bring the bulk of the 19,000 tons of freight and machinery estimated to last us through the winter months. I know it seems impossible, but I'm shooting no bull. In three weeks that first contingent of sixty-nine McNamara men turned to and cut enough piling, and lumber, and hauled enough fill to construct a permanent road and a permanent dock. The dock was capable of unloading two ocean-going vessels at one time. They even had a narrow-gauge railway running out on the wharf and for motive power we used a Fordson tractor.

"That narrow-gauge railway was our salvation. When the S.S. *Fleurus*, the S.S. *Carolus*, and the S.S. *Conatco* arrived they were unloaded in jig time. Another great help was the safe arrival of the *Foundation Jupiter*, the crane-barge. She had heavy lifting gear and was a tremendous help in unloading the heavy machinery out of the various vessels.

"The feat of constructing the permanent road in three weeks is all the more remarkable when one considers that in many places the men had to splice two trees together in order to have piles long enough to reach down into reasonably solid foundation. Only too often we found it necessary to drive piling to between 100 and 125 feet. Fortunately, we had plenty of suitable trees in the woods that lined the banks of both rivers.

"We were also fortunate inasmuch as we obtained a certain amount of native labour. The men worked well and we paid them standard rates of wages, but they created quite a problem. They came from far and near and every man that arrived brought along his wife, their children, and their dogs . . . The families averaged five to six in number. They had to be fed. A high piece of land near Otter Creek was allocated to the natives. They soon built themselves 'tilts' out of logs, empty packing cases, building papers, and other scrap materials.

"The equipment and materials piled ashore from the ships was covered with tarpaulins until warehouses could be built. Men were detailed to start work on the construction camp proper. We needed more labour in the worst possible way. To get men in a hurry and before the freeze-up came I decided to scrounge all the labour we could in Labrador. Early in October we were able to hire the Hudson's Bay coasting vessels *Fort Cartwright* and the *Fort Rigolet*," Bill told me.

"The Captains had instructions to go up and down the Labrador Coast and bring in all the able-bodied men they could contact. Old Captain John (that is the only name I know him by) was very deaf and he only had one arm. I told him I wanted men and warned him that he was *not* to bring the women and children also. What *he* did constituted the next and perhaps the most severe labour pain of all. He either misunderstood my instructions or, knowing the habits of the natives, disregarded them altogether. When he arrived at Terrington Basin with his first human cargo, he also brought along all the mens' wives, their children, and their dogs.

"There was nothing we could do about it. The summer season was too far advanced to permit of sending the natives back to their own villages. We were faced with quite a problem. They had to be fed, housed and clothed—but we needn't have worried. They just ambled over to Otter Creek, made themselves acquainted with the other natives, had a jolly old-time reunion, and doubled up until the newcomers had time to build their 'tilts'. They seem capable of living on next to nothing. A sheet metal stove and a few pots and pans seem to be the most important of their worldly possessions. I was very relieved when Mr. Gillard, the Hudson's Bay factor, offered to augment our available supplies with stores from the Hudson's Bay Post at North River. He appointed Charlie Groves local manager and everyone was happy once more.

"It is surprising how news travels in Labrador. The natives seem to have a special grape-vine telegraph. One night I was turned in, trying to obtain some hard-earned rest. I was called about midnight, a native wanted to see me. He was covered in heavy wet snow. It was early November and winter was setting in with a vengeance. He wanted to know where he could sleep. I was tired

and rather irritated at being disturbed at that hour. I asked why he had bothered me to find out where he should sleep.

"Quite casually, and very politely, he informed me that he had travelled from Hopedale, many sea miles up the coast, in order to work for me. He explained that he had travelled all the distance in his little 20-foot sail-boat. He had brought along his wife, his six-weeks-old baby, a son fifteen and another daughter nine. He explained to me that his real concern was to know where his family should sleep. They had been two weeks making the journey and were all tired and cramped.

"I fixed them up for the night and found out afterwards that they had actually travelled several hundred miles down the coast in their little 20-foot boat, living on flour and dried salt fish. They had cooked on a tiny stove made out of a five-gallon oil can, varying their diet with fish they caught en route. The mother was still nursing the baby. These nursing mothers never seem to go dry no matter how little they eat or what hardships they suffer. The family seemed to think nothing of the feat. They took it all as part of the day's work. To me it was all very disturbing. The native population was rapidly increasing. I required over two thousand men; in proportion that meant ten thousand women and children. Something simply had to be done about it.

"By the middle of October, 1941, the fly pest was over, but the weather set in to be really awful. Cold drenching rains which turned to sleet followed each other in rapid succession. Then there came about a week of real Indian Summer. The evenings were cold but the air was invigorating and acted like wine on the tired men. With renewed energy they continued to work cheerfully. The road construction gangs pushed a road from the end of the narrow-gauge railway through to the

bluff. This was all thickly wooded swamp-land but the bulldozers made short work of it. Next a 'Deadman' was rigged up on top of the bluff and with the aid of blocks and tackle the first bulldozer was hauled safely on top of the bluff. With the power supplied by the bulldozer other machinery was quickly hoisted up onto the plateau.

"It was these bulldozers and the heavy scraping and grading equipment that made the construction of the permanent road from the plateau to the dock possible. The manner in which the men handling the bulldozers teamed up and drove their machines side by side through dense brush, three abreast as smoothly as a farmer would steer a three-gang plough through cultivated land, is a feat which must be seen to be appreciated.

"Once the road was finished and drainage ditches had been dug on each side, the bulldozers were given another task. They were used to cut a grade from the top of the plateau down to the lower road. It required skill and daring to handle these huge mechanical monsters to cut away the side of a perpendicular hill so that the finished road had only a gradient of five degrees but, like everything else these men handled, they finished their task without serious accident.

"Once the road gave access to the top of the plateau, motor transports hauled the 19,000 tons of stores and equipment from the dump on the shore up the hill to where wooden stores, warehouses, and workshops, had been hastily erected," Bill told me in conclusion.

During my residence at Goose Bay as S.N.O. I got to know Bill Durrell very well. It was marvellous the way in which he timed his work. He organized the men so that there was no waste of man-power and no wasted effort. The warehouses were ready at daybreak the same day the road was open to make transport available. The machine shop was ready for the machines an hour before

the trucks hauled them up the hill. The electric light plant supplied light the first night after the machine shops were ready for night operations and, above all else, it was the machine shop that helped most in performing this modern miracle in construction. Durrell insisted on a fully equipped machine shop. He insisted on everything that went into it being of the best. He got what he wanted and the machinists were proud of their shop and they produced results.

Over a thousand miles from civilization the machine shop made parts and manufactured equipment which would have set the contractors back months had they been forced to wait for priorities and shipping facilities.

Once a propeller was required for the shaft of a home-made barge which had been built for carrying lumber and towing log rafts down Goose River. Not even the firm who manufactured the marine engine could supply a propeller. It was essential that the lumber and the logs be brought down the river, otherwise the job would have been delayed weeks, if not months. The machine shop received orders to make a propeller. Not only did they make the propeller in a matter of days, but it gave better performance than the commercial propeller did when it arrived months afterwards. They kept the second as a spare.

Because the bar at Sandy Point had only 26 inches of water over it at low tide, Bill Durrell suggested dredging it to 24 feet. The type of ship used as freighters to Goose, sink 1 inch to $27\frac{1}{2}$ tons of freight. By deepening the channel 3 feet over the bar, each ship would be able to carry approximately an extra 700 tons with safety. Most authorities who were consulted agreed with the idea but didn't think it feasible. They considered the cost would be prohibitive. Then again they argued no dredge was available.

Bill Durrell is different. He is definite in his belief that there isn't a job under the sun that cannot be done if tackled the right way and with the necessary determination. He just hasn't got room in his brain for thoughts of possible failure. With the assistance of his machinists he improvised his own dredging equipment, and did the job which others were convinced couldn't be done. He completed the dredging of the channel through the bar in six weeks' actual working time. After he had finished, permission came through that he might "try".

Ships arrived at Goose and broke down. The McNamara machine shop repaired them and got them to sea again on schedule. Chief Engineers threw up their hands in holy horror when the deck winches were worked night and day with 20 pounds more steam on the boilers than regulations called for. Bill put his own men aboard to drive and service the winches. He guaranteed the Masters and Chief Engineers to make all repairs and replace all damaged parts. He had guaranteed the naval authorities he would unload ships at Goose at the rate of 600 to 700 tons a day, per ship; or 2,000 tons a day from 3 ships all working at the same time. In other words, he guaranteed to turn a 3-ship convoy around in 6 days, and he did it. In July, 1943, his men unloaded over 13,000 tons of mixed freight in 5 days.

When concrete blocks and sewer pipe didn't arrive, the contractors made what they needed right on the job!

There in Goose Bay I saw the spirit which was unconquerable. Before there was a trestle built, men waded ashore with loads on their backs. After the trestle was built, men shoved cars along the bogey railway tracks by hand—hard, tough, backbreaking labour they performed cheerfully, the men all taking a pride in their accomplishments. After the tracks were laid the cars were hauled by a Fordson tractor. When the road was ready

the work was done by trucks and trailers. But the work never stopped. At Goose one saw the "March of Time" of construction work performed before one's eyes. In a few months, the job developed from the original hardy group of pioneers with their picks and shovels and hand axes, to an army of civilian workmen equipped with the most modern and powerful construction machinery ever handled to date in any part of the world. This civilian army of workmen broke most construction records ever established.

Once the teams of bulldozers attacked the heavy growth of trees on the plateau, the landscape changed as though a magician had worked wonders overnight. One day a forest of trees, one month later an airport with planes using it.

The men in charge of the work wanted to surprise the world, and they succeeded. The top of the plateau itself was almost level. It was thickly wooded, but the tree roots did not go deep down into the ground. They were spread out close to the surface under a thick layer of caribou moss and sand. By lining up the bulldozers three abreast, each one slightly behind the other, a swath was cut through the forest in much the same way a snowplough pushes aside the snow off the highway in winter.

On November 16th, 1941, a radio message was sent by Mr. Fred Brown, Resident Engineer, to the Department of Transport at Ottawa, informing the Minister that three runways, each 7,000 feet long, were completed and ready to accommodate the largest planes. Officialdom in Ottawa just couldn't believe the message. Half a dozen signals received from Ottawa demanding further information, and explanation proved they didn't believe Mr. Brown's original message! He confirmed his original message saying the runways were ready to accommodate the

largest type of aircraft being flown at that time. It was true!

The contractors gave instructions to Bill Durrell, their General Superintendent, that the work on the actual airport was to be organized and governed by two main factors:

- (1) It was to be made temporarily available for use at the earliest possible moment;
- (2) The work was to be so planned that there would be no disruption of air service during the spring break-up in 1942.

With ingenuity which is really commendable, a plan was devised by the contractors and agreed with by the Department of Transport Engineers, under which three temporary runways were to be cleared and graded *outside of, and surrounding the three permanent runways*. It was also agreed that one of the permanent runways (all of which had to be cement-paved) would be levelled and graded at the same time as the temporary runways were cleared. After it had been cleared and graded, it was to be covered with heavy brush to protect it from frost during the winter. This would make it ready for paving early the following spring.

The plan was carried out "in spite of hell and damnation," to use the words of one contractor's employee. This man told me "It rained almost every day during October and November, 1941, as we worked on those temporary runways. To make the job more difficult, the days were shortening fast. Our orders were to push the job through at all cost so we rigged up flood-lights and lit up that tremendous area which was to be the landing field. We worked night and day, Sundays included, without one single letup, until the three temporary runways were in operation.

"We used bulldozers for clearing off the trees and surface moss. The trees were windrowed and then piled for burning in the spring. A power shovel and clam-digger were used in piling the brush before burning it. One thing was in our favour: at no time do I remember grading that involved cuts more than eight feet deep." My informant was Tom Fox, a foreman in charge of concrete work.

The bosses worked with an eye always cocked for a change in the weather. The almost continuous fall rain could, and would, change overnight to snow or sleet. Nature would clothe the Arctic wastes with her warm protective winter garment of heavy snow. No life could exist through an Arctic winter without abundant snow. Snow enables wild life to bury itself and keep alive. Snow keeps the moss and grasses upon which animals feed from being winter-killed, just as snow protects the farmer's winter wheat in Canada. Snow enables man to travel by dog-teams and on snow-shoes; it also provides him with the material with which to build a house or igloo, when forced to camp overnight in the wilderness.

Snow makes it possible for planes to land and take off on skis, and for an invading army to dig-in and be comfortable with little else than an eiderdown sleeping-bag and a primus stove on which to cook their food.

If it were not for the fact that snow falls gently down upon the Arctic wastes and rests lightly upon the caribou moss, this valuable food on which caribou and musk-ox feed would not be available as food in the winter. During the winter, the large herds of caribou remain in areas where there is plenty of food. After the snow falls they use their specially shaped antlers with which nature has provided them, to plough away the snow so that they may reach the moss and grasses underneath. If the frost came immediately after the rain, all this food would be flattened

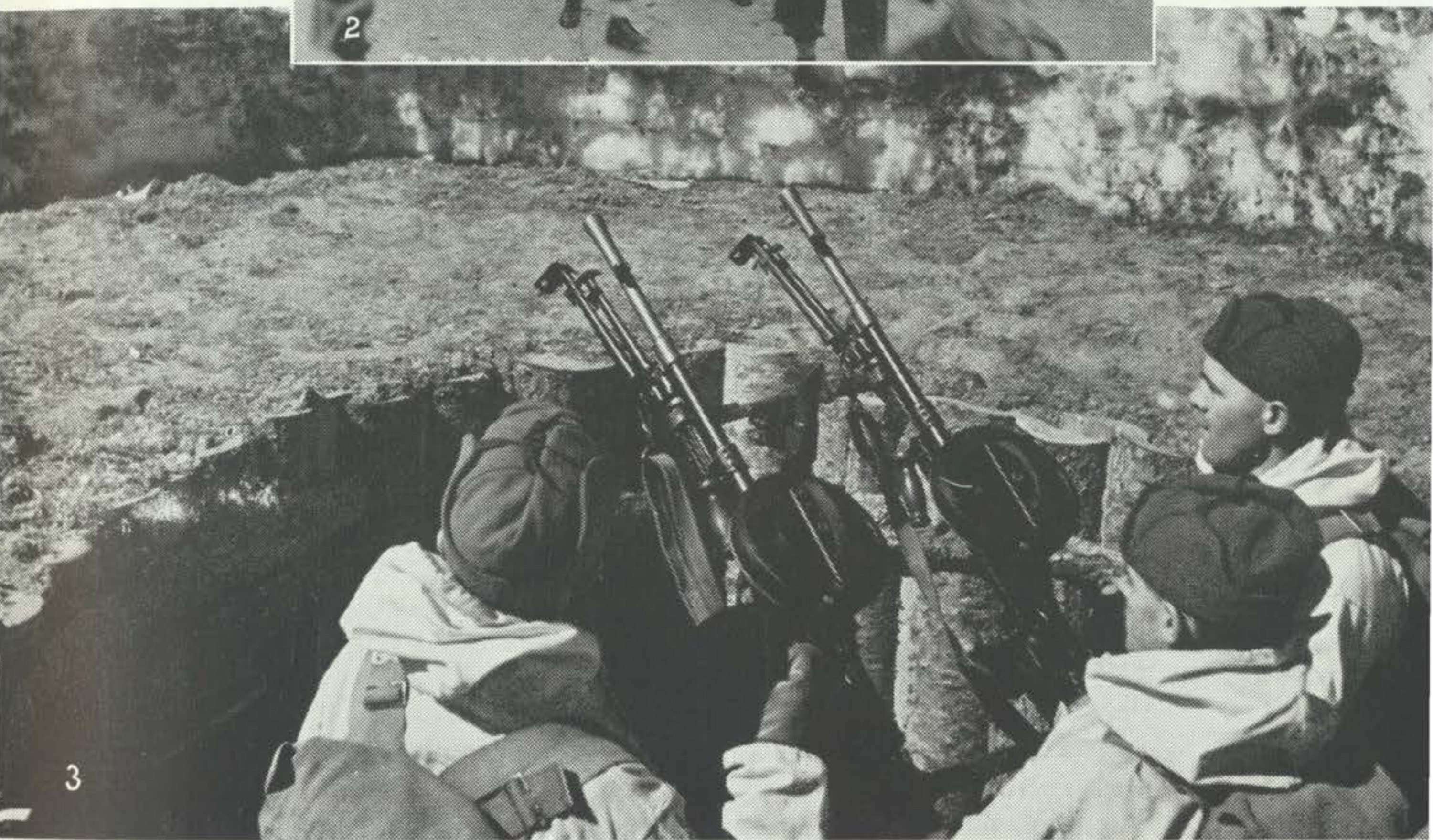
down and form one solid mass, frozen to the earth. The protective covering of snow leaves this essential food standing and the animals can graze even in the worst of the winter weather. At least, this is how native hunters explain their survival.

When the snow did come to Goose in 1941, the contractors were ready for it. All through the long winter months the maintenance of the runways was carried out by dragging and rolling the snow with rollers fitted with levelling bars. This procedure was continued until a well packed level surface had been built up. Subsequent snow deposits were removed by Sicard snow-blowers after it had been windrowed with "V" and "Blade" ploughs.

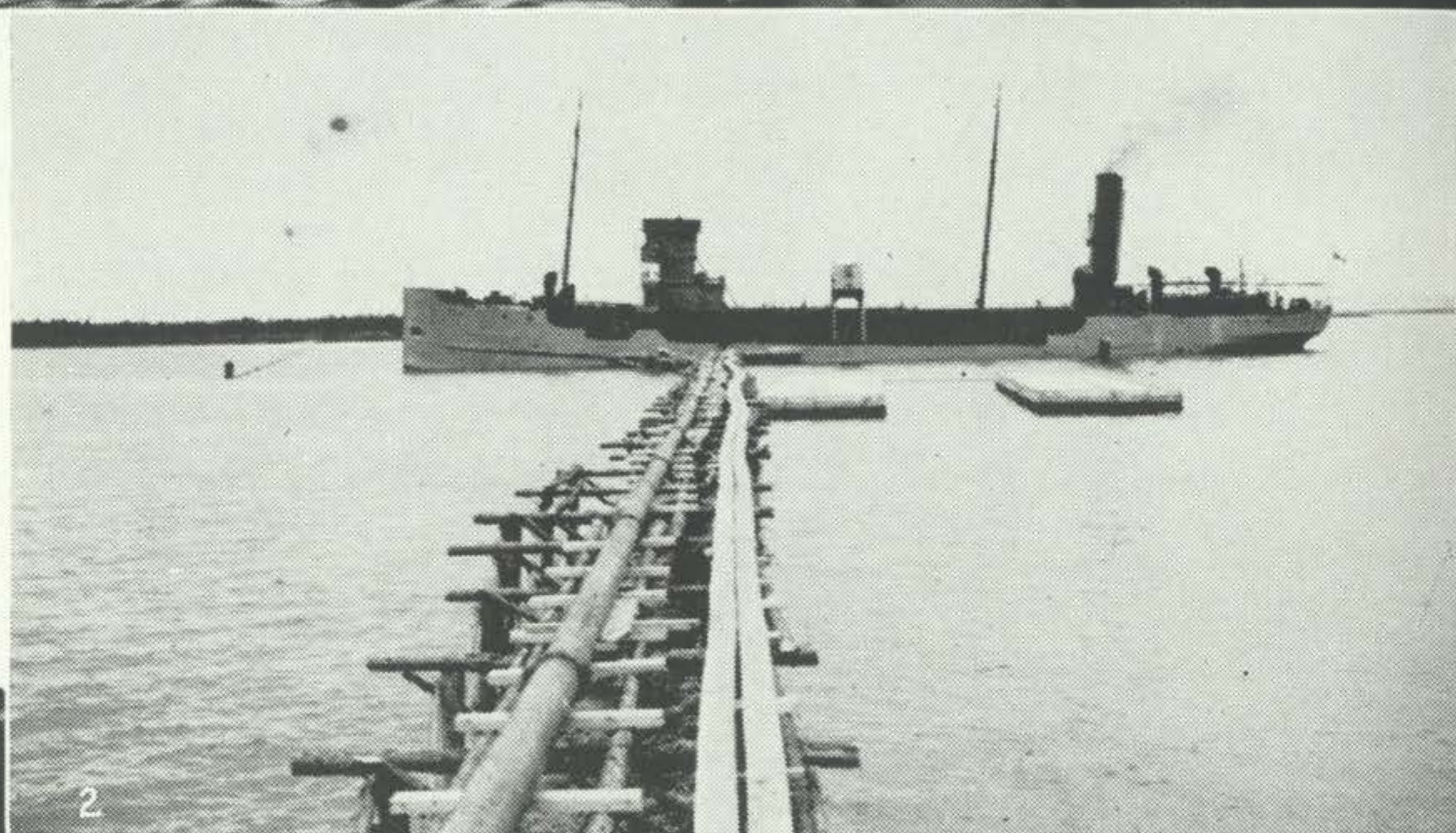
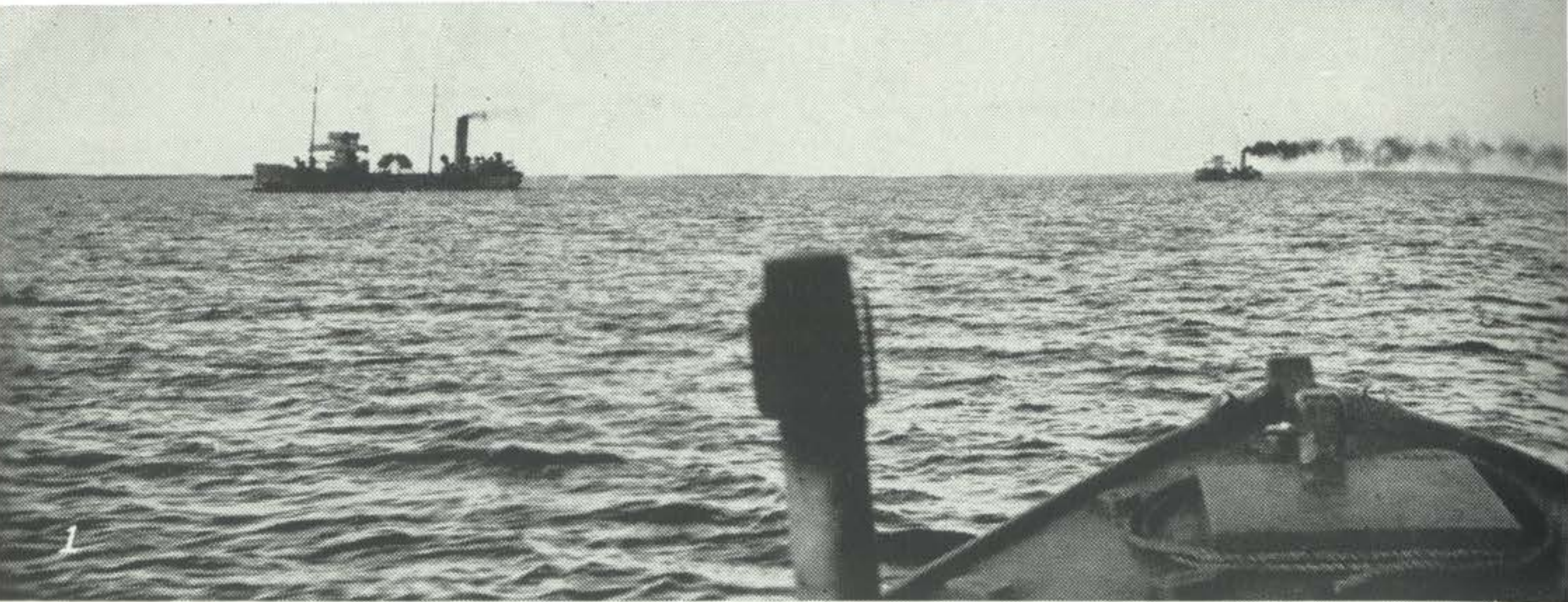
Once the temporary runways were completed, work was started to complete at least one of the permanent cement surfaced runways before the break-up in the spring. Millions of yards of fine sand were available, but gravel was hard to find. Prospecting parties found a deposit at North West River on the hill across from the Hudson's Bay Post. In order to haul gravel from this pit, which is twenty-one miles from Goose Bay, a winter road was built.

Using bulldozers, 21 miles of road, 70 feet wide, was completed in one month. The road was put through heavy timber as well as over muskeg and swamp. A bridge had to be erected over the Goose River, 1,500 feet wide.

How could such a job be done in so short a time? One of the chief reasons is that no time was wasted carrying men back and forth to and from the job. The road construction gang stayed right on the job from the moment it was started until it was completed. *The cook house and their two bunk-houses were placed on skids and kept up with the gang.* When the men were hungry they stepped right off the job into the kitchen to eat. When they were tired they fell right into their bunks



(Top) Level plateau on which airport is built, foreground showing sheer drop of over 80 ft., to swamp land extending one mile to shore of lake; (centre) Section of Defence Force on march. Temporary shacks used first winter in background; (bottom) A Bren gun section at the alert.



(Top) Tankers arriving with high-test gas; (centre) Unloading pier at Otter Creek; (bottom) Gasoline storage near Otter Creek.

and slept. But, before one man was allowed to quit work to eat or sleep, another man took his place. Bill Durrell once told me, "I believe in giving men reasonable time to eat and sleep, but damn it, a machine should work twenty-four hours a day when there's a rush on. That's why I insisted on having the best machines, the best machine shop procurable, and the best machine operators that money can hire."

When the road gang reached the gravel pit at North West River, they left the bunk-houses and field-kitchen there for the use of the pit gang who immediately began dynamiting the frozen gravel. After the bulldozers had completed their task of clearing the road, the next fall of snow was levelled and iced and the road was kept open for hauling gravel all winter long.

The weather was so severe that the frozen gravel had to be loosened by blasting and then loaded into 6-cu.-yard Ford trucks and 10-cu.-yard Kingham trailers. The bodies of both trucks and trailers had to be fitted with hardwood bottoms and saturated with calcium chloride and salt to prevent the gravel freezing to them. Lorain 40-power shovels were used to load the gravel after the banks had been blasted.

To keep the roads iced during the winter with the temperatures that sometimes dipped to 60 below, was quite a problem in itself. To prevent the water from freezing in the tanks, as it was being hauled from the source of supply along the twenty-one mile stretch of roads, the tanks themselves had to be fitted with heating equipment. An ingenious device was invented which "did the job and delivered the water warm at the location being iced".

Hauling gravel twenty-one miles was a costly matter and just to illustrate how Providence worked on the side of the Allies, or how fortune favoured the brave, Bill

Durrell got a "hunch". Before the snow flew, he prospected along the shore-line of Terrington Basin near where they had first landed, and he found a small deposit of gravel which yielded 200,000 cu.-yards. This was hauled to the airfield for stock piling.

Next spring, after the snow had melted and the frost was out of the ground, Bill had another of his famous hunches. One day as he was driving along a road they had built out of the lumber camp at Goose River, Bill thought it might not be a bad idea to try and find out if the gravel deposit he had located on the beach ran inland. He took an old native with him and told him to dig a trench along a line he marked out for him. Bill instructed the native *to keep digging until he told him to stop*. Having set the man to work, Durrell went out to Goose River Camp. He gave instructions to his foremen, and then returned to the airport to look after the thousand and one problems which kept cropping up from moment to moment. He forgot all about the native workman he had ordered to keep digging until he was told to stop.

About a week later, Bill happened to drive to Goose River. He saw the long deep trench which the man had industriously dug. Bill walked over and looking down into the trench he saw the native digging away as if Australia or China was his goal. To Durrell's further amazement he saw the man was digging into as fine a gravel deposit as anyone, with his problems, could wish to find.

Bill ordered the native into his car and drove him back to the construction camp at the airport. In less time than it takes to relate, steam shovels were on their way to the newly discovered gravel deposits. *That miraculous find enabled the contractors to handle over 4,000 tons of gravel each SHIFT through the gravel-cleaning and stone-*

crushing plant they set up in the immediate vicinity of the airport site. Call it bull-headed luck or Providence, just as you like, it was nevertheless a fact.

To build the mill, first of all a Pioneer and Cedar Rapids portable crushing and screening outfit was set up. Afterwards a large-capacity crushing, washing, and screening plant was assembled from units available from the contractor's stock. This was built around two Pioneer jaw-crushers. When this part broke, or that part was missing, or the wrong part was found and didn't fit, there was no telephone at Goose Bay on which to call the agent and ask that he deliver the required goods right to the job in a hurry. Oh no! Men had to scratch their heads and work their brains. Blacksmiths, toolmakers, and machinists had to make the parts required right on the job.

No detail was overlooked. To reach a capacity of washing 4,000 tons of gravel each shift, the supply hopper for the plant was placed flush with the ground so that the pit-run material could be dumped into it by the LeTourneau scrapers, three of which handled the 4,000 tons each shift. Then again the stock pile was spread over an area of 10 acres in order that the sun and wind could dry and thaw out a maximum amount of the frozen gravel at one time.

In order to wash the gravel satisfactorily, approximately 1,000 gallons of water were needed every minute. That was quite a thirst to quench, particularly when the pumps ordered to handle the water supply failed to show up at the close of navigation. The problem was "Just another of them things", as the boss foreman of the crushing plant explained it to me. Bill Durrell and his foreman held a confab. As the result they built a reservoir, or settling basin, in which to catch the used water. Small pumps which the contractors happened to have on hand

were found satisfactory to pump the water out of the settling basin back into the plant. By using this water over and over again the one big pump they had was powerful enough and had sufficient capacity to pump the original supply up on top of the hill, and handled the reduced load satisfactorily.

During the month of December, 1941, the first permanent camp was occupied, on top of the plateau proper. The tents, which had been pitched down on the swampy shore, were abandoned. This gave much joy and comfort to those hardy pioneers.

All through the winter months, the ring of axes, and the buzz of cross-cut saws could be heard in the surrounding forests of spruce and balsam which fringed the river valleys. Portable sawmills were set up in the locations where the better stands of timber justified the effort. At the airport site itself, a big new sawmill was soon in operation.

Up in the Labradors, spring fever hits people even more strongly than it does farther south. Colonel A. D. Smith, Officer Commanding the U.S. Forces, Group-Captain McFarland, Commanding the R.C.A.F., and one or two others, just couldn't resist the urge to go trout fishing as soon as the rivers in the vicinity of the airport were clear of ice. Colonel A. D. Smith had arrived to take charge of the American section of the air base, while Group Captain McFarland had been appointed Officer Commanding the R.C.A.F. at Goose Bay. Colonel Medhurst, O.B.E., commanded the defence force.

Bill Durrell also went out fishing with them, but he was after fish of another kind. Some of the natives had told him about "old lumber mills which had been operated years ago only to be finally abandoned and let go to ruin". Bill never overlooked a bet. He wandered through the woods along the banks of the rivers while the others

fished. He found the ruins of old lumber mills. Out of those ruins he salvaged enough equipment to help build a permanent sawmill at the air base site. This mill was still operating twenty-four hours a day when I visited it with him at 3 o'clock one morning in July, 1943.

Bill Durrell had a habit of driving around on a tour of inspection at any old time of the night, just when the spirit moved him. He said to me, as he drove me around the base that wonderful summer night, "You know, Commander (he always called me Commander) I feel it's kind of a dirty trick to drop in everywhere at all hours of the night because I've got such a loyal bunch of men. Most of them would die for me if I asked it of them—I've got the best bunch of foremen in the whole world. If that statement wasn't true we couldn't have broken most world's records. Personally, I do "Sweet Fanny Adams". I just drive around and offer a word of advice here, or make a few suggestions there—but its been a habit of mine always to be on the job night and day. I sleep when I feel like it and I prowl around just when I feel like it. The men understand—they don't resent it."

One of the most troublesome setbacks experienced during the construction period was the loss of two huge high-pressure boilers and other valuable machinery while in transit to Goose Bay by sea. The cargo vessel carrying this freight hit a submerged, uncharted rock when navigating the approaches to Hamilton Inlet.

The loss of this vessel was a severe blow to the contractors and the service personnel located at Goose Bay that first winter. The contractors lost two high-pressure boilers intended to supply the base with central heating, and the machine shops, wood-working factory, etc., with power. It was a heart-breaking loss for the service personnel because their supply of beer for the winter went down with the ship also. A wet canteen

means a great deal towards keeping up the morale of the men in a place like Goose Bay.

There is an old saying that "luck favours the brave". The loss of his high-pressure boilers was a severe blow to Bill's plans—but he didn't sit down and cry over milk that had been spilt. No! Instead, he got busy to improvise a temporary supply of electrical power for his machines, and he set a small army of men to work cutting fuel wood and making heater stoves. There was no need to drive the men on those jobs. Winter was just around the corner. Gales blow at 40 to 60 miles an hour, the mercury at times drops clean out of sight. The Arctic winter isn't the kind of weather any person would want to experience without plenty of fuel handy and a good stove with which to heat his shack.

One day Bill Durrell decided to go timber-cruising. He knew he would require about 25,000,000 feet of lumber before the project was completed. He travelled up the Hamilton River Valley and the Goose River Valley. There were some beautiful stands of timber close to the rivers. He found trees 90 to 100 feet high. Just the kind of "sticks" he needed for wireless masts, and extra long piles.

The sun was bright and the air was cold and clear. Bill's eye saw something that just didn't fit in with the rest of the surroundings. His eye had caught a flash of salmon pink amongst the deep green of the spruce and the glistening white of the snow.

He altered direction and investigated. What he found stopped him in his tracks. He was completely dumb-founded. He said afterwards that he just stood there "bitched, b . . . d and be-wildered." He pinched himself to see if he wasn't dreaming. He began to wonder if he hadn't taken leave of his senses. The loss of those two

boilers in the S.S. *Cantico* had been a severe blow to him but surely it hadn't driven him crazy?

Bill walked closer. He reached out and touched the one nearest him. Yes, it was cold and hard—it was solid steel and no hallucination. He had walked upon two locomotive type, high-pressure boilers, nearly a thousand miles from the nearest railway, right in the heart of the Labrador wilderness. To him it just didn't make sense. If any fairy godmother had appeared before him and offered to produce two high-pressure boilers, with a wave of her magic wand, Bill couldn't have been any more surprised. It was no wonder he thought he might be taking leave of his senses!

But here they were! Well preserved, clean, rust-free, and newly painted. Bill still thought he was having a realistic sort of dream even after he had thoroughly inspected the boilers inside and out.

Finally he said to himself, "Well, there they are. Two boilers. What I need more than anything else in the world at this particular moment. The main thing is to get them into camp and ask questions afterwards." Bill started for camp, blazing his trail. He prayed the boilers wouldn't disappear as mysteriously as they had appeared.

In a matter of days Bill Durrell had the boilers loaded on skids and they were on their way into Goose Bay construction camp.

The mystery was ultimately solved. Thirty-five years before, some Canadian business men heard of the wonderful timber that could be had for the cutting on the banks of the Hamilton and Goose Rivers. They investigated the reports and found them to be true. They decided to form a company and go into the lumber business in a big way. The boilers and machinery were

purchased, and shipped to Goose Bay, and landed near where Bill found them.

Unfortunately for the Lumber Company, one of the partners proved to be crooked and dishonest. He absconded with most of the funds; another partner died from shock; a third upon investigation found that a forest fire had swept through some of the best of his newly acquired timber lands located between the two rivers. (I could still see the evidence of these destructive fires in 1943. The charred remains of trees five feet across at the butt were found near the Hamilton River.)

To put a final touch to the timber deal, inexperienced men, not heeding the advice of the natives, failed to allow for the tremendous rush of waters down the rivers during the spring thaws. The whole of one winter's cut broke free from the booms located at the mouths of the rivers, and was scattered the length and breadth of Lake Melville.

The third partner, whom I afterwards met in Ottawa, decided to make his first loss his last and pulled out. About the only things of any value saved from the calamity were the two boilers, intended for the original sawmill. A Canadian bank took those as security for money they had loaned towards financing the venture. Two high-pressure boilers in the middle of Labrador were, however, of less use to the bank than a paper brush and a pail of paste will be to Mr. Hitler after the war is over. The bank officials, not wishing to throw any good money after bad, told a native, named McLean, that if he painted them occasionally and looked after them they would pay him for his trouble when the boilers were finally sold. McLean painted the boilers whenever they required a coat of paint. He had remained faithful to his promise during all those years.

After Bill Durrell had ferreted out the above information, he asked the native what he wanted for his labour

and materials when he worked on the boilers. The man said he thought about \$200. Bill gave him \$400 and called it a deal. Bill never did tell me what he paid the bank . . . but it is safe to say, if anybody knowing the fix he was in for need of a couple of boilers, had asked him \$5,000 or \$50,000, Bill would have said, "Hells bells, we need the so-and-so boilers in the worst way. Not having them will delay the completion of the job by seven months. It's a cost-plus contract anyway,"—and he'd have paid what he was asked.

Call it bull-headed luck, or call it Providential blessings—call it what you like, Bill got his boilers, the central-heating system soon was going full blast, and the machine shops, wood-working factory and the sawmills were soon singing a merry old tune. Power machines were kept working continuously, except when shut down for repairs.

From the middle of June, 1942, until navigation closed at Goose Bay about the middle of November, work on the new airport was pushed ahead with feverish intensity. The first ships were due to arrive from Montreal and Quebec about the end of June and aboard them was the much-needed cement for the 7,000 feet runways.

In addition, thousands of tons of valuable machinery and other materials essential to the progress of the development had to be shipped north. In all, approximately 79,000 tons of freight had to be handled into Goose Bay alone during the five-months open season. A total of thirty-five ships were used to meet the requirements and the enemy did not pass up any opportunity of doing damage. U-boats received orders to harass and delay the work by attacking shipping.

As soon as the St. Lawrence opened up for navigation in the spring of 1942, the enemy submarines moved north to operate in the area between the Gulf of St. Lawrence and Newfoundland. As the summer advanced

the U-boats actually operated in the mouth of the St. Lawrence River. In doing this they placed themselves right across the track of shipping routed for Labrador and Greenland. While it is not permissible to give details of the enemy successes they were considerable. This fact was made public by the heated discussions which took place between Mr. Roy, Member for Gaspe and the Minister for the Navy, the Hon. Angus MacDonald, and the Minister for Air, the Hon. C. Power. Accusations were flung across the floor of the House of Commons by the member for Gaspe, stating that there was a lack of co-operation between the Naval and Air Forces. Those who knew the truth felt sorry for the Ministers who had to pacify the public without giving away information which would be of value to the enemy.

It wasn't lack of co-operation between Naval and Air Force Commands; it wasn't inability to properly organize what forces were available to best advantage that enabled U-boats to operate in the St. Lawrence, it was lack of suitable vessels and lack of suitable planes which caused the trouble. The Canadian Navy pressed every vessel that could be spared into the battle of the St. Lawrence. Even converted yachts were used, and Fairmiles, but they could only do their best and their best wasn't good enough to cope with the activities of modern U-boats. Nazi submarines had the advantage over our available forces in speed, armament, and cruising range. Modern German and Italian U-boats can, when on the surface, out-distance even our Fairmiles, or M.L.s, as they were afterwards called. The ideal anti-submarine craft must have a minimum speed of 30 to 40 knots to permit them to be most effective and deadly in their attacks. They also require a quick pick-up. Anti-submarine craft should be able to maintain high speed for several hours because modern submarines can proceed at

full speed submerged for 3 hours before their batteries run down and require recharging. British submarines were built in the last war which developed 15 knots when submerged and they could maintain top speed for 2 full hours if necessary, when running in for an attack or when escaping after an attack. British submarines were built during the last war capable of doing 25 knots when on the surface. There would appear no reason to suppose that modern submarines can't give better performance than the British obtained when submarines were more or less in the experimental stage.

The planes available at the time did not have endurance sufficient to make them really effective.

During the campaign in the St. Lawrence, Canada lost H.M.C.S. *Raccoon*, a converted yacht. The battle, however, as far as Goose Bay was concerned, failed to prevent the construction work continuing and the project actually drove on ahead of schedule.

The Goose Bay project suffered a severe blow due to an accident that happened to Bill Durrell. During the summer of 1942 he was requested to fly from Goose Bay to Battle Harbour in Labrador, by Colonel A. D. Smith, the Commanding Officer of the U.S.A.A.F. The Americans wanted some work done. The Colonel asked Bill to look the situation over and advise him regarding the matter.

Bill, always ready to oblige, agreed immediately. Colonel Smith and McNamara's General Superintendent were great friends. "Bill, why do you have to stand there shivering like a dog passing razors?" the Colonel asked him jokingly, and added, "A fellow earning your dough should at least buy enough clothes to keep him warm."

As a matter of fact Bill was dressed well enough and he certainly wasn't suffering from the cold. It was just the

way the Colonel had of paving the way to give Durrell a present of a very fine leather jacket. It was a wonderful garment, heavy, windproof, and perfect in every way, except that it wasn't uniform. The Colonel felt there wasn't anybody he'd rather see wear that jacket than Bill Durrell. He therefore started kidding him into accepting it. Finally Bill did, and by doing so saved his life.

Bill took off by Canso for Battle Harbour and he wore the leather jacket the Colonel had given him. While coming down to land on the surface of the bay, something went wrong which caused the depth-charges to explode. I understand that Bill was the only survivor. He was sitting up front when the explosion occurred and was blown clean through the top of the plane. The explosion was of such force that it broke the window-glass in every house in Battle Harbour, two miles away. A fisherman saw something fall flop into the water not far from his boat. He pulled over to investigate and found a bloody, crumpled bundle wrapped up in leather. The bloody bundle was Bill Durrell.

The fisherman hauled him into the boat and then vomited. Durrell's body was taken ashore. It was laid out on a slab in a temporary morgue and pronounced officially dead. His wife was notified of the regrettable accident. Newspapers published obituaries and said nice things about Bill's ability and bemoaned his untimely death. But Bill wasn't dead! After a few hours reclining uncomfortably on the morgue slab he started to move. Some person fortunately noticed Bill move and called the local doctor. Bill couldn't afford to die just then. He still had the Goose Bay airport to finish. The doctors who treated him and Bill himself give credit to the leather jacket he wore, for saving his life. He was smashed to a pulp but the strong leather jacket prevented fatal injuries to his vital

organs. After only three months in hospital, Bill returned to the job at Goose Bay.

Reference was made previously to the grading and covering with brush one of the permanent runways. In the early spring the brush and accumulated snow were removed with bulldozers and the surface was gravelled and paved. This runway was then placed in service, and provided continuous landing and take-off facilities during the thawing period and while the other runways were being paved.

For their full length of 6,000 feet, two of the permanent landing strips were cleared for a width of 1,100 feet and one to a width of 1,600 feet. As a means of preventing the blowing of loose sand, the trees in the triangle enclosed by the runways were left standing and the growth of moss adjacent to the runways left undisturbed.

After the re-opening of navigation in 1942, the paving of the runways with Portland cement was commenced, the graded runways being first gravelled to a consolidated depth of 4 in. The paving work involved the placing of 623,000 square yards of 6-inch concrete, the equivalent of over 53 miles of 20-foot roadway. The paved width of the runways is 200 feet, with wide gravelled shoulders on both sides. High-early-strength Portland cement, supplied by the Canada Cement Co. Ltd., was used exclusively. An average strength of over 5,000 pounds per square inch at 28 days was obtained throughout the job.

Paving operations were conducted with great speed, record runs of 13,000 sq. yards or 11,500 lineal feet of 10-foot strip being completed in a single shift of 12 hours. On this work two complete paving units were employed, each unit embracing a Koehring 34-E paver charged from trucks carrying three 1¼-cu.-yd. batches, one Jaeger spreader, two Jaeger finishing and tamping machines, and one Koehring longitudinal float. Steel forms were used,

brought accurately to grade with mechanical-form tampers. The use of two finishing machines with each paver was found to increase the output of pavement by 1,000 lineal feet per day. The controlling factor in the paving operations was the delivery of cement, the equipment being capable of keeping up with the shipments of cement as they reached the job. Inspection of the concrete paving work was under the direction of Sternson Laboratories Ltd. of Brantford, Ont.

An ingenious device that was developed to speed up operations was the welding of a small angle iron by its two edges to the face of the steel forms, providing a projecting triangle that formed a longitudinal V-shaped slot along the edge of each slab. When concrete for the adjoining slab was placed, it formed a projecting V that keyed the two slabs together without the necessity of using dowel bars. Not only was there a saving in steel and in the time of placing the bars, but their absence permitted the use of the line-grader across the whole width of the strip without the need for any hand work. "Rayseal" joint filler, manufactured by the United States Rubber Co., was used. The only reinforcing used in the paving slabs, which were 10 feet wide by 100 feet long, with a construction joint at intervals of 50 feet, was at each corner, where a ½-inch round bar, bent in hairpin shape, was placed in the plane of the slab.

Concrete pipe in various sizes from 18-inch to 36-inch diameter were manufactured in the field by the contractors and installed for runway and main drainage wherever needed, discharging over the hill that extends along the shore. Concrete brick for chimneys, buildings, etc. was also manufactured at the site.

Pending the development of a permanent water supply, the water requirements of the camp were secured from a creek and delivered in tanks. Later a supply from

a neighbouring river was developed and is now piped to the airport and the various buildings through about 20 miles of mains. Wells were tried out as a possible source of supply, but proved unsatisfactory. Septic tanks were installed to handle the sewage.

Highly important to the speedy completion of the contract was the adequate maintenance of the large array of equipment that the contractors brought to the job. The first building, therefore, to be started at the site after the erection of storehouses was the large, well-equipped machine shop capable of performing all types of repairs. It was found to be an indispensable aid to the smooth running of the job by keeping the machines "rolling".

To begin with, of course, regardless of the maintenance facilities that were provided, it was necessary to have equipment that was well built and able to "stand the gaff". Consequently, every care was taken to assemble machinery that could be depended upon to give a good account of itself.

CHAPTER 7

The Story of Ferry Command Pilot George

ATMOSPHERIC disturbances up North, irrespective of the cause, often make it impossible for pilots to hear the radio signals which indicate they are "On the Beam". This fact caused one of the most thrilling and spectacular events ever experienced at Goose Bay Airport.

"George" (we will call him just George) was an old-timer at the flying game when he first landed at Goose. Years before the war he had won fame as a Polish flier in Europe by making some very successful dare-devil flights. As a hardy pioneer he broke several long-distance records at that particular stage of flying history. He had also won renown as an Arctic pilot. He had taken part in several rescue and mercy flights into the ice-bound wastes over northern Europe.

George had learnt to fly before modern inventions had developed "instrument flying" into a reliable science. He was iron-grey and well over forty when the Hun invaded his native Poland. He was believed to have used up eight of his nine lives before joining the Trans-Atlantic Ferry Command.

George never was very much enthused by the "modern gadgets" installed in the instrument panels of modern planes. In George's opinion, they were all right

when they worked, but!! George was determined to rely on his uncanny sixth sense of direction to take him "home in the manner of a homing pigeon" in emergency.

On the particular ferry trip of which I write, George's instruments began to act up. He was terribly bothered by electrical storms. He got off his course. His magnetic compasses went hay-wire when he was over a large iron-ore deposit which is located in the interior of Labrador not very far, as the crow flies, from Goose Bay.

To complicate matters, an exceptionally low ceiling of clouds had caused Goose Airport to be closed to all planes except those unable to be diverted to other landing fields because of lack of fuel. George was in a bad spot, and he knew it. Heavy cloud formations hung low over Goose Bay Airport and they were several thousand feet in depth.

Knowing George must be running short of fuel, officials waited anxiously to hear from him but the atmospheric disturbances were really bad for radio reception that night. George was two hours overdue. A pitch-black night made ground objects invisible at twenty yards. Everyone on the station thought George was a "Gone Goose". Flight-Lieut. Al Cheeseman and his rescue crew actually began to organize the search they intended to carry out as soon as flying could be resumed.

Everyone knew that if George had been forced to make a crash landing, in inky darkness, amongst the cloud-enshrouded mountains which surround Goose Bay, he was likely a dead man. Al Cheeseman was convinced that an experienced flier like George would get down on a river, in muskeg, or on a frozen lake.

Minute by minute the time crept onwards to the hour when the anxious watchers knew he would reach the absolute limit of the plane's endurance. Just as all hope was about to be abandoned, the noise of a plane's engines

reached the ears of the officers in the Control Tower. There could be no doubt about it being George's plane. No other craft was supposed to be in the air that night. He had overcome all other difficulties and was "home"; but he was high above the landing-field in the clouds, and couldn't see to get down and land. Because of atmospheric disturbances radio communications between Control Tower and plane were out.

The "Beam" was also no help to him; that was evident. The way in which he circled the airport clearly indicated he sensed where he was but couldn't pick up the "Beam" to lead him in to his landing.

Airmen as a general rule are a pretty hard-boiled lot. They are used to taking it on the chin. There is hardly a day when some pal of theirs is not reported missing or killed in line of duty. But this was different. They had to stand there helpless, listening to the drone of George's engines, while the gas in his tanks got lower and lower like a wounded man's blood drips out of his veins, drop by drop, until he dies.

Then somebody gave birth to a "brain child". Why not open up with a barrage from the anti-aircraft guns? It was just possible George might hear them. Then he would at least know where he was. No sooner thought of than done.

The terrible silence of that sub-Arctic night was split asunder by the staccato bark of the guns. Then there was silence again. Everyone strained their ears to listen to the noise of the circling plane's engines.

Precious minutes were passing by. The plane seemed to remain at the same altitude. It was still circling. It was quite evident that George had not heard the guns.

Those on the ground felt sure that George knew he was somewhere in the vicinity of the airport but was afraid of coming down from above the ceiling in case he

crashed into the tops of the mountains which encircle three sides of the airport. It was evident he was up there waiting for a break in the clouds to give him a chance to pick a place on which to make a forced landing before he completely ran out of gas.

The gunners were ordered to fire again. This time the fuses of the shells were set to burst at extreme elevation. Perhaps George would see the bursts of the shells even if he couldn't hear the guns. George did, and having seen the bursting shells he knew where he was and began to make his perilous descent. Down through the Stygian darkness and thick layers of clouds he came. Would he come out clear or would he tangle up with the W/T mast, the Control Towers, or the tree-tops surrounding the base?

Everyone present seemed to hold their breath. The roar of the plane's engines grew louder and louder. The ceiling above the landing-field was less than 150 feet. The flares on the runways burned but dimly in the snow-filled darkness. Ambulances and fire-fighting equipment rushed onto the landing-field with screaming sirens. They were ready in case the crash caused the plane to burst into flames.

Suddenly the big plane burst through the clouds with a roar. Many hearts missed a few beats as the watchers waited to see if he would straighten out before he crashed.

George saw the flares. He worked calmly with his controls. The plane was too low to circle the field and come in on the correct runway into the wind. He straightened out and made a good, if somewhat bumpy landing with the wind behind him. But he managed to land on the cement. A few minutes later George was in the Mess having a drink and telling the boys all about it.

That wasn't the last of the adventures George was fated to experience. When he took off for Scotland two

days later, he ran into blinding blizzards and iced up so badly he was unable to continue. He knew he could never reach Greenland in the teeth of the blinding sleet-storm. To come down into the ocean meant certain death. Again it was night. There was only one thing to do. He determined to turn back, fly low and try to make a landing on the coast of Labrador. If the crew survived the crash landing, there was just the bare chance they might be located by search planes before they froze to death.

He flew until he made out the shadows along the iron-bound coast of Labrador. The land was covered deep in snow. Once again fortune favoured the brave. The storm cleared for a few minutes.

It is no child's play to set down a big bomber on a field where the runways are over a mile long. The suspense the pilot must have experienced when trying to pick out a reasonably smooth spot on which to land on that rock-bound coast can be easily imagined. To make matters worse it was dark. To crash into the sea near the shore would possibly have prevented the plane catching fire, but the crew would have had to swim ashore. Had they survived the buffeting of the waves upon the ice-covered rock-bound shore they could not possibly have survived in wet clothes, without shelter, in temperature which was fifty below zero.

George didn't want to make his forced landing too far inland because he knew the quickest way to reach shelter and human assistance was to try to make one of the settlements located along the coast.

George flew over the coast, turned south, and then flew parallel to the shore-line a few miles inland. He was flying low—far too low for comfort and peace of mind, but he had to see the ground. Once or twice between squalls he saw mountains on his right and trees below him. He prayed for a momentary lull in the storm. Then

it came . . . he saw a clearing in the trees . . . it might be the frozen surface of a lake. He set his plane down on the snow and ice without killing any of his crew. The plane buried its nose in the deep snow. The propeller blades were badly bent. The big ship tried to do a somersault—tipped up on one wing then settled down into an almost natural position.

The crew were all rather badly shaken. Some were bruised. The shock had been quite severe when the plane was brought up all-standing while travelling ninety miles an hour, but none of them were seriously injured. They were all feeling thankful to their Captain and to God for being alive.

Soon they were scrambling from the wrecked bomber and taking a look around. During a lull in the storm they saw the trees which marked the edge of the woods in the distance. Dressing themselves as warmly as they could with the clothing available, and taking what food they had left, they started for the shelter of the woods. They took their parachutes along, to be used to make a shelter and provide additional warmth.

The new-fallen snow was deep and made the going heavy. They had no snow-shoes, and sank into the snow up to their knees, every step they took.

The wind blew with renewed fury. Particles of ice, sleet, and wind-swept snow cut their faces. The sub-zero temperature soon caused their noses and ears to freeze. They trudged stubbornly, if wearily, onwards. What followed is suitable for one of Mr. Ripley's "Believe-it-or-not" cartoons.

Labrador is quite a large country, extending as it does from the straits of Belle Isle in the south to Cape Chudleigh in the north, and from the Atlantic Coast in the east to the boundary of Quebec province in the west.

The "natives" and the Indians do not mix freely. The whole country is very thinly populated. The small settlements are widely separated and located along the coast. A few native villages are to be found up the larger inlets. Some of them are hundreds of miles apart. Both "natives" and Indians are trappers and hunters. The Indians are nomads and live in canvas tents winter and summer alike. They travel wherever they feel inclined. They only return to the settlements to trade their catch of fur for supplies and ammunition etc. The "natives", who are descendants of white men who married native women, establish trapping-lines. These extend inland up the lakes and rivers hundreds of miles from their settlements. Along these trapping-lines the natives build hunting-shacks known locally as "tilts".

Hardly had the Polish flier's crew gained the shelter of the woods than they stumbled blindly upon one of these "tilts". Inside the "tilt", which was half buried in snow, the badly frozen airmen found a stove, plenty of dry wood, an axe, and some food.

They were thoroughly rested and in fairly good shape when a rescue party from Cartwright finally arrived to guide them back to civilization. The wreck of their bomber had been seen from the air and its position reported by the pilot of another plane flying from Goose several days after the accident.

CHAPTER 8

The Story of Al Cheeseman

NEARLY every person in Canada, and most of the newspaper-reading public throughout the world have, at some time or another, heard of Al Cheeseman, "The Flying Alderman", from Port Arthur, Ontario. He is one of Canada's most famous bush pilots. He has piloted planes for exploration parties over both poles and he has organized and taken active part in more rescue work and mercy flights than any other living man.

I had the pleasure of flying with Al on several occasions. I got to know him well while stationed at Goose Bay, where Flight-Lieut. Cheeseman was in charge of "Rescue and Salvage" work for the R.C.A.F. At the age of forty-four he is still flying over the Arctic wastes, risking his own neck flying aid to others in order that they may live. I played a great deal of "knock rummy" with Al. The only time I saw him get really excited was when he got "false knocked" by "Diamond Jim" Mellick when playing a triple.

Al Cheeseman was born in St. John, N.B., in 1899. After leaving school, to use his own words, "he led a hell-of-a-life."

His parents were of the good old-fashioned type who maintained proper discipline in their home. Al showed promise as a boxer. His parents, both of them, saw to it that he worked hard to condition himself by day. They

also insisted that he train faithfully, and never allowed him to break training by staying up late at night.

"I was in bed before 10 o'clock every night," Al told me, and added with typical Cheeseman humour, "When my pals were out nights putting their arms around their girl friends I was putting my fists into a punch bag."

Al grew up to be hard as nails. He is quite willing to admit that it was the self-discipline he was taught at home, and the physical training he received when young, that developed the fine physique and mental alertness which enabled him to survive a dozen aviation accidents which would have killed a man less able to stand the physical hardships and mental strain involved. He told me he never took a drink of alcoholic liquor until he was thirty-four years of age. Even now he never touches a drink while on station or flying. But he does make up for lost time when on leave.

Al admits having made and thrown away two modest fortunes since he was thirty-four. He went through \$50,000 in two years, the second big bust-up he had. It lasted until the bank stopped cashing his cheques, "when his account became overdrawn."

"To be honest," he told me, "I joined the Air Force as an L.A.C. in order to get straightened away. It wasn't long before I got my commission. In the Officer's Mess I had the opportunity to drink again. When I get drunk I'm just an Indian. I act as if I didn't have a brain in my head. I can't help saying things I wouldn't think of saying when sober. When I'm drunk I always seem to want to pick a quarrel or a fight with those who are senior to me. I once knocked a Squadron Leader out cold. I thought he had it coming to him. Maybe he had . . . but opinions differ about that sort of thing."

"What happened?" I asked.

"Well, naturally, I got particular hell from the O.C.," Al said with a smile. "I had been working pretty hard. He gave me fourteen days' leave. I guess he also must have thought the other guy had it coming to him. I swore then that I'd never take another drink in an R.C.A.F. Mess and I never have."

Al kept this intention until the night the mess gave a farewell party to Group Captain Evans.

"I'm just a Flight-louie," Al said seriously. "Drinking on the station wasn't fair to the O.C. I like him. He's a swell guy. He's only a youngster as far as years go—but he has guts. He knows his job. He's one of the best pilots that ever handled a joy-stick. Getting drunk and cutting up rough wasn't fair to Bert . . . so . . . I cut out drinking while on station. But," Al hesitated while he took a puff at his cigar and his eyes twinkled with merriment. "But—Oh! Boy! When I'm through up here, when I go out to Canada, when I hit civilization, will I ever tie one on!"

Three months after this conversation I flew out to civilization the same time Al was on leave. I met him in Montreal. He had certainly "tied one on" the night I saw him!

There is only one Al Cheeseman. He is one of the finest messmates and one of the most resourceful and reliable fliers in the R.C.A.F. He is unique! He is well liked and popular with his brother officers. He has a tongue as quick as a snake's, but while caustic to a degree, he has a way of saying things that leaves no rancour.

Officers often engage in a word war with Al but his gift of repartee usually ends in their coming off second best. He is a man who has the gift of talking about his adventures and exploits without boasting or bragging. He is always humorous and interesting. He is a man the younger officers will sit and listen to for hours. They

learn a great deal from Al. He is always entertaining, always interesting—never dull.

There is probably no man living today with Al Cheeseman's record and experience as a flier. He studied mechanics after leaving school, until 1923. Then he took up flying. His first experience was with commercial aviation concerns which had foreseen the possibilities of opening up Canada's northern mineral zones by using planes to transport prospectors and their supplies instead of canoes and dog-teams. He flew planes that were used for survey work. He flew transport planes loaded with freight, machinery, mining equipment and supplies. He rapidly made a name for himself flying men and supplies from civilization to the sub-Arctic wilderness.

Planes could fly hundreds of miles in a few hours and complete a journey which would take a canoe or dog-team months to accomplish.

His many flights into the unmapped territories of the Canadian North, his resourcefulness in time of emergency, his ability to live off the land, and his uncanny knack of being able to extricate himself and his companions from situations which would have meant disaster and even death to others, soon won him fame. Al's happy-go-lucky disposition, his untiring energy, his cheerfulness and never-say-die spirit, were characteristics which won him the admiration and respect of all interested in aviation.

He was flying with Captain Oakes on mineral exploration work when Al met up with his first serious accident. The freeze-up caught the party unprepared. Al, flying a land plane, made an attempt to get out to civilization. The flight ended in disaster when Al was forced to make a crash landing on a frozen lake. The crash bent the propellers and did other damage which looked to be irreparable at the time. "Cap" Oakes set off overland to obtain help. Al stayed with the plane. To make a long

story short, Al improvised skis, straightened out the propeller blades, and flew the plane out, arriving in civilization ahead of "Cap" Oakes.

Al is rotund. He weighs nearly 200 pounds. He is bald. His strong features bear the scars of innumerable minor accidents. He is rarely seen without a big cigar stuck in the side of his mouth. He is a lone wolf. He figures he knows his job and likes to do the work assigned to him in his own particular way. He hates to take orders and to use his own words: "I just can't stand red tape and being frigged around."

He is known as the "Flying Alderman" because he is a clever and shrewd politician and he was elected Alderman for Port Arthur, Ontario, where he made his home prior to the outbreak of the present war.

Al loves a joke. He is never so happy as when telling a good one on himself. Al knows most of the Air Vice-Marshals and Group Captains in the R.C.A.F. from pre-war days.

During the early summer of 1943 conditions had been quiet up in Goose Bay as far as crashes were concerned. Al had been employed mostly flying personnel and supplies to R.C.A.F. detachments who were establishing Radio and Meteorological Stations up and down the Labrador coast. Because of fog and rain and a continuous swell, landing a heavily loaded Norseman on the water, off islands that had no sheltered harbours, was a trying and often dangerous procedure.

While Flight-Lieut. Cheeseman was in Canada on leave, Group Captain Evans did most of his work, and on several occasions, when naval interests were involved, I flew with both Group Captain Evans and Al Cheeseman. One day, landing and taking off at Rigolet, I thought I was making my last trip in a plane. A nasty wind was blowing across the narrows and the strong tide, running five knots,

was against both wind and sea. While circling to observe the best place and direction from which to land, the plane was tossed and bumped about in the air currents to such an extent that other occupants in the plane took on that yellowish-green appearance which precedes actual airsickness.

When we finally landed, the shock felt as if we had torn off the floats. To make matters worse, the engine cut just as we were 100 feet above water. After landing we drifted in the current and nearly went onto the rocks. The occupants of a motor boat saw us in time, realized our predicament, and came to our rescue.

Taking off that same day we had a full load. As we soared into the air, we got caught in a down draught when just over the Naval Examination Station. Our altitude was only 1,000 feet, and we must have dropped 300 feet in one bump.

On another occasion, landing at an American base where ships were about to deliver supplies, there was a heavy swell. Flying conditions were at their worst. On return to base, Group Captain Evans said, "I don't know when I was ever so near being killed as I was today." These conditions Al Cheeseman and Corporal Landry, Al's mechanic, accept as part of their day's work. Landry has been flying with Al Cheeseman since long before the war. He is to Al Cheeseman what Man Friday was to Robinson Crusoe. They are a great team.

One can very well imagine Al's feelings when a member of the R.C.A.F., who was combining a routine inspection trip with the hopes of some good fishing, walked into the Mess one afternoon and greeted him as follows: "Pretty soft, eh Cheeseman? Nothing to do but sit around smoking cigars and reading *Time*!"

Cheeseman never stirred from his comfortable seat. He rolled his cigar over to the corner of his mouth and

replied, "I may do damn all around here, but I'm far too busy to find time to criticize what others are doing."

On another occasion, a newly arrived American nurse had been introduced to Al in the R.C.A.F. Mess. Her escort, an R.C.A.F. fighter pilot, was telling her some of Al's more famous exploits and aroused her interest. During the course of conversation the American girl remarked: "I wonder if he was blond or brunette before he went bald?"

The fighter pilot roared with laughter. They had had a few drinks and he thought this was a really good joke. Al was playing knock rummy with two other officers and myself. The fighter pilot came over to our table.

"Al!" he said, "Miss B— wants to know if you were blond or brunette before you went bald?"

"Oh! does she?" replied Al without a moment's hesitation, and added, "If she's that interested in me tell her to come around to my quarters after Mess closes and I'll show her."

On still another occasion, Bill Durrell, Group Captain Evans and Al Cheeseman flew from Goose to inspect several locations off the Labrador coast.

Group Captain Evans was at the controls, having asked Al if he minded him flying the "Hookensniffie". This is the name Al christened his Norseman. Bert Evans took the plane nicely off the harbour but the motor cut when they were at 1,500 feet. They were over the trees near Mud Lake. Bert tried to glide down into the lake but it was quite obvious they were not going to make the water.

The tree-tops came nearer and nearer. Al, flying as mechanic, calmly fussed about with the gadgets on his instrument board. Just as the underparts of the floats were scraping the tree-tops, the engine roared to life

again. They began to gain altitude. A moment later they were safe and on their way once more.

The party could not complete their journey in one day. It was mid-July and they decided to land and camp overnight on the shores of a lake now known as "Cheeseman's Lake". It was a glorious summer's evening when they glided over the mountain-tops and dropped down into the lake, which is eight miles long by about one to one and a half miles wide.

Al directed Group Captain Evans and he taxied the plane to a beach of golden sand. They made the plane secure and then pitched camp on the weather side of the point where the cool evening breeze would give them some relief from the black flies and mosquitoes.

The long summer twilight (it never grows really dark in July in those latitudes) gave them light enough to see to cook their evening meal. After washing the dishes they set up the pup tent and made sure the mosquito curtain was properly secured in position, then they lay down on their sleeping-bags to relax and enjoy a final smoke before going to sleep. Al was lying on the broad of his back, hands under his head, knees bent up, and one leg crossed over the other. A few mosquitoes had managed to enter the tent at the same time as the men. Al was trying to gas them out with cigar smoke.

It was one of those perfect nights. The silence of that great expanse of mountains, forests, and streams was only broken by the song of frogs and the occasional howl of a wolf which was annoyed and astounded that a huge bird-like creature and animals with strange scents should have invaded his domain in such a sudden and casual manner.

Each of the three men was thoroughly relaxed and enjoying communion with his own thoughts. Bill Durrell didn't smoke. Bert Evans and Al did.

There was silence for a moment as if an unseen conductor had suddenly cut off nature's orchestra with a quick sideways motion of his baton. Then out from the perfect silence of that northern night they heard a splash.

"I'll bet that fellow weighs five pounds if he weighs an ounce," Cheeseman remarked.

"I'll bet we have him, or one like him, for breakfast," Bert Evans replied. They knew it was a trout which had jumped at some unsuspecting night fly.

The manner in which Bill Durrell had first found and then set up the two old locomotive boilers and generated enough steam to supply the wood-working factory, the machine shop and the principal quarters of the R.C.A.F. with central heating had often been the subject of jest mingled with admiration.

"Do you know," Bill remarked, "I think putting the central heating pipes above ground here at Goose is all a lot of hooey. It would have been a hell of a lot less trouble and expense if we had buried them in the sand." He was thinking of the new plans which had just been received for the central heating at the base. Bill's mind was always on the job.

"I guess you're right," Bert Evans muttered dreamily. Then he added "That was a mighty close call we had this morning, Al!"

Al shifted position, took his cigar from his mouth and replied, "Holy Mackerel! There was no need to worry. The devil might have wanted to take you or me, or both of us, but he'd never take Bill Durrell. If Bill ever goes to hell he'll insist on changing the whole damn heating system before he's been there more than twenty-four hours."

"Do you know," Al told his companions, "the last time I landed on this lake I felt in my pocket for a cigarette. There was just one left in the package. I was standing

on the float and threw the empty package in the water. It hardly hit before a big trout rose and swallowed it. Honest to God! I'm not lying," Al protested, at some scathing remark passed by the Group Captain.

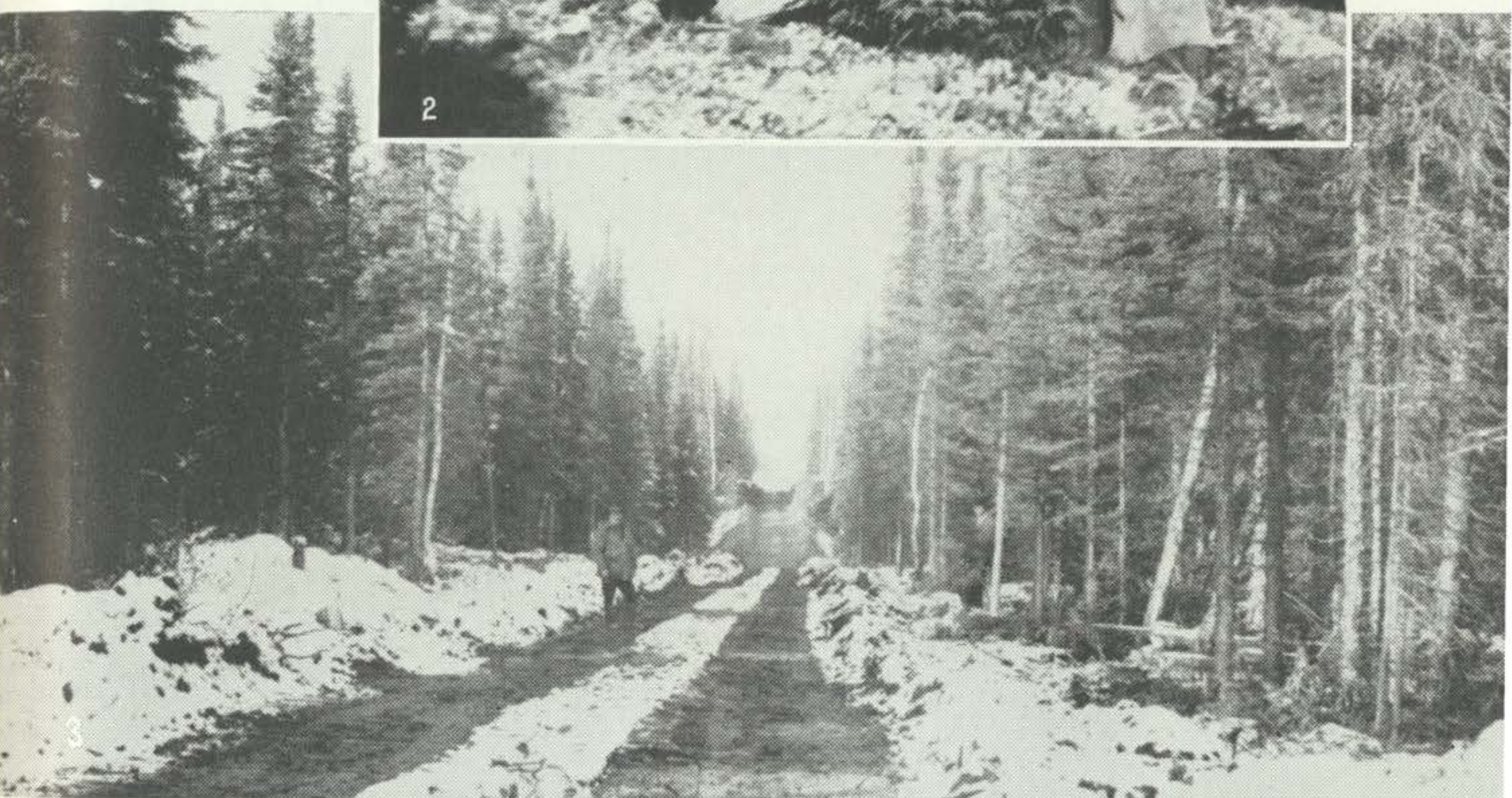
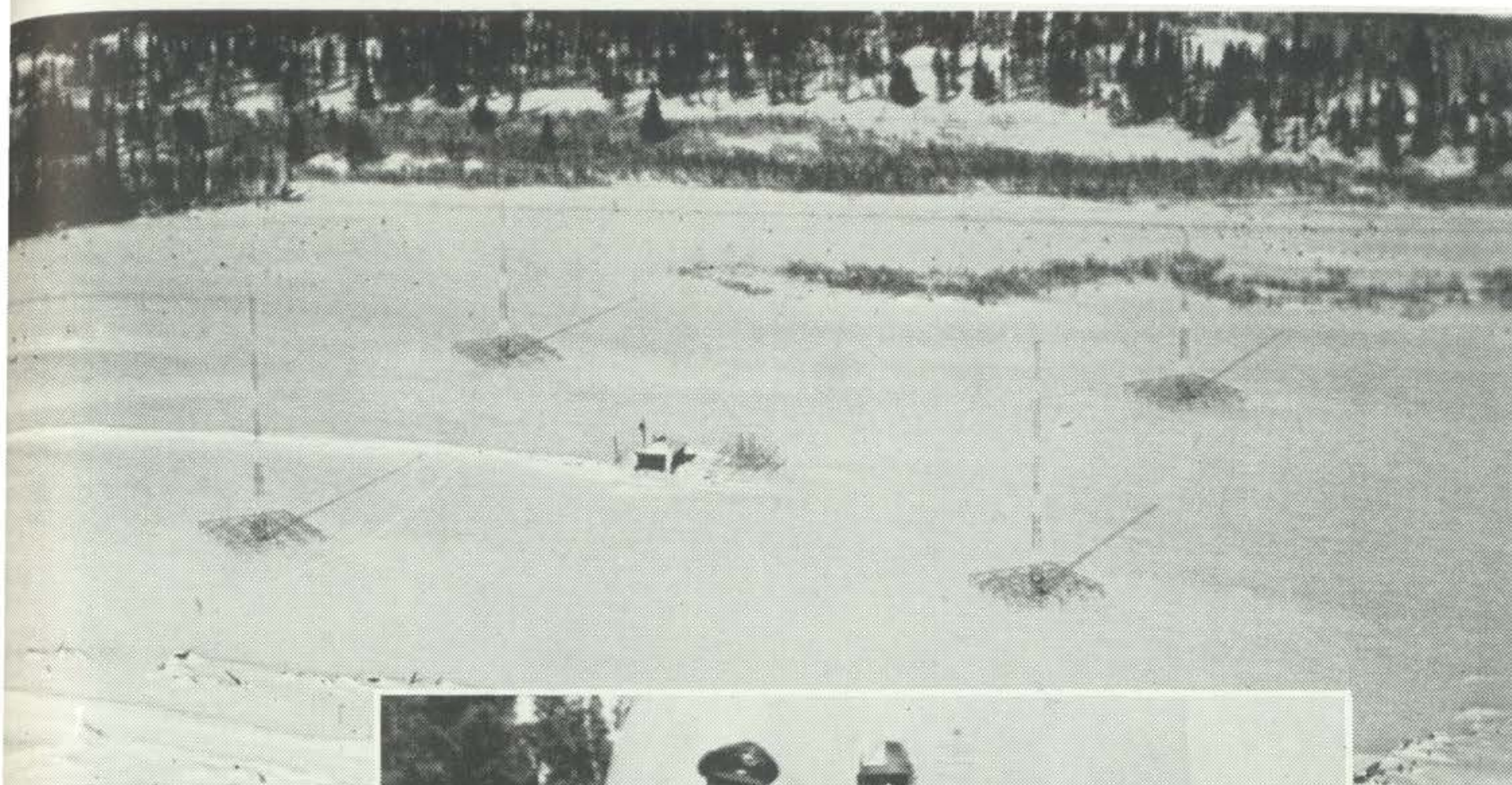
"Well, it's a good yarn," Bill muttered sleepily.

Next morning Bert Evans crept quietly from the tent, not wishing to disturb the sleepers. He had put his fishing-rod together the night before. Picking out a Northern Cockatache fly with two small silver spinners, he attached it to his lead. Then he made his way quietly to the point of a sand bar which jutted away out into the lake. Just to the south of the sand bar is a deep hole. He made his cast. Wham! He was hooked into a five-pound speckled trout. He caught four more before returning to camp for breakfast. He was convinced that Al's story was true!

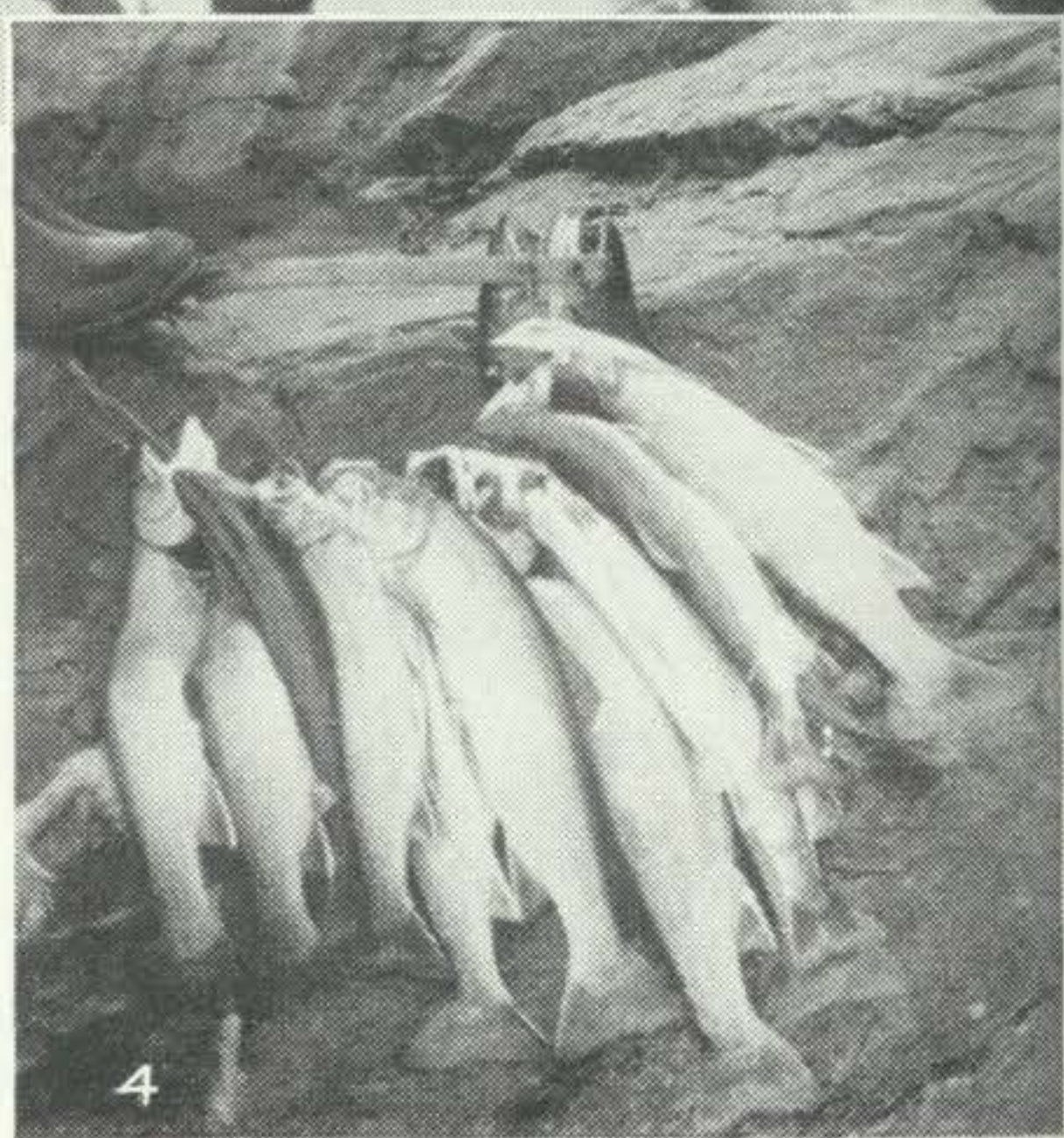
In 1928 Cheeseman was retained by Captain Oakes and other mining interests to fly over the Arctic in search of huge copper and iron deposits which explorers knew must exist. The Copper or "Blond" Eskimos had used native copper out of which to make tools and weapons before they were discovered by the white man. Captain J. Alexander, who had been for years employed in the far north by the Hudson's Bay Company, and Reveillon Freres, had seen plenty of other convincing evidence that great mineral wealth was hidden under the snows of the little-known Arctic wastes.

The plan was for Captain Alexander to proceed north to Port Harrison with the supply ship, while Al Cheeseman flew up a new Fokker aircraft. This plane was the sister ship to the ill-fated *Bremen* in which the Germans first flew the Atlantic from east to west. Using the ship as a base, Cheeseman was to fly prospecting parties to various locations.

While up in Goose Bay as Senior Naval Officer, I



(Top) Radio Station at Goose Bay; (centre) P. O. Christie, Al Cheeseman, Landry, Group Captain C. Trecasten, and friend at Cheeseman Lake, near Labrador-Quebec boundary; (bottom) Clearing and grading radio range road along which the 4-mile copper aerial extended.



(Top) The "Hookensniffe" on Cheeseman Lake; (centre) The author, right, Al. Cheeseman middle and a friend; (bottom) Fishing party on Caravalla Point and catch of 18 trout, weighing 87 lb.

flew from Gander in Newfoundland, to Goose Bay in Labrador with the Timmins brothers. They had six or eight prospecting parties working within 300 miles of Goose. Valuable discoveries have been made, but, according to the Timmins brothers, war conditions and other considerations may make it impossible for them to undertake a large diamond-drilling project until the war is over.

What these expeditions found and the knowledge gained is the property of those who financed the undertakings. The depression of 1930-39 made it difficult to finance good prospects much nearer to civilization. Nature has guarded her treasure house of the North well and thoroughly in the past with ice and snow in winter and terrible travelling conditions in summer. The rapid advances made since the beginning of this war in applied science, modern aviation and amphibian motor transport have solved all northern transportation problems and opened the way to great post-war developments.

There are copper deposits and mountains of very high-grade iron ore already discovered. Coal has also been found well inside the Arctic Circle.

On many islands in the same area and on some near the Pole itself, game has been found plentiful, so plentiful that only this summer—1943—Eskimos were moved from South Baffin Land (where contact with whites has caused epidemics of disease which threatened to wipe out the tribes) to a large island 800 miles north. Here conditions were ideal and permitted these simple, kindly people to live the lives they were accustomed to lead before the white man upset their peace and tranquillity.

The development, due to the war, of the plan known as the Arctic Project, may well be the beginning of the gigantic effort which will "roll back the last frontier" and

open to mankind the treasure house of the Northern wilderness.

In order to play his part in exploring the north in 1928, Al Cheeseman gave up his position with Western Canada Airways, to fly with Wilkins over the Arctic regions. He had by that time established his reputation as an expert Northern flier. He could service a plane so that it could fly in sub-zero weather. He could land on water or snow or ice with confidence. He had developed the instincts of a homing pigeon.

In 1929, after his return from the Arctic, Sir Hubert Wilkins, the famous Australian explorer, offered Al the position of Chief Pilot to fly him over the Antarctic. To quote an old news clipping: "This expedition was financed by the German-American publisher Hearst for its news value. The supply ship *Scoresby* was provided by the British Colonial Office. The expedition was commanded by an Australian, Sir Hubert Wilkins, and the plane used was flown by the famous Canadian Bush Pilot Al Cheeseman."

The account of the exploits and adventures engaged in and encountered during his Antarctic experience can be obtained from any public library. My story concerns Goose Bay and the type of men who assisted in rolling back the last frontiers of civilization.

In July, 1939, Al was back in the Canadian North. He was flying prospectors and men interested in the new gold discoveries from Sioux Lookout into the new gold camp. Returning from one of these trips his plane mysteriously caught fire. Al was in a tough spot, but he kept his head. He landed his burning plane in Lake Millage, where the kindly waters extinguished the fire, and Al swam 100 yards to shore and safety.

Cheeseman lived a full life from 1930 until 1937, flying winter and summer alike, sometimes employed by the

Dominion Government (which was engaged in the newly developed Aerial Photography Survey) sometimes flying for commercial concerns. At other times he was developing his game-and-fishing tourist business near Sioux Lookout; but he was always flying. He flew hunters and fishermen into favourite lakes and game country.

One night Al told me the original story of "The Co-Pilot". This story has been told and re-told in flying circles all over the world since the war began. Many fliers have been given credit for being the originator, but Al Cheeseman was actually the man who flew on the mercy flight about which it is told.

Al was living in Port Arthur at the time. It was before the second World War broke out in all its fury. About four o'clock this particular afternoon, his telephone rang. A doctor was on the line.

"Al," he said, "a woman has met with a serious accident away back in the bush. She is suffering from a gunshot wound. We have just received word from a guide who hiked out to the nearest telephone. We figure the only way to save her life is to fly in and give her a blood transfusion and other necessary medical attention. Will you fly me in, Al?" the doctor asked anxiously.

"Sure I'll fly you in, but don't waste any time. We have to reach the lake before dark. Do you know its exact location or where it is from some well-defined point marked on the recent survey map?" Al asked him.

"I've got all the necessary information," the medical man assured him and promised to meet him at the plane in half-an-hour's time.

The plane took off from the water at Port Arthur about five o'clock that evening. An hour and a half later Al was circling above the lake, looking it over carefully in order to locate any rocks or shoals which might wreck him when landing. He saw plenty, but knew he could

make a landing clear of any danger down the centre of the lake. Sufficient daylight still remained so that he could see to taxi in to a landing through the submerged rocks near the shore-line.

He made a safe landing, taxied over to the shore, and landed the doctor and an assistant. An Indian was waiting to guide the medical men to the hunting-shack five miles away where the woman lay near death's door.

After the medical men had left, Al secured his plane for the night, made camp, had his supper, and then turned in.

Cheeseman was awakened by the doctor about midnight. "Al," he exclaimed seriously, as soon as Cheeseman was awake, "Al, we've got to get that woman to the hospital. Only an operation can save her life. It's got to be done right away."

Al was fully awake by this time and sitting up.

"Put that damned light away from my eyes," he said crossly. "Just hold your horses a minute and let's talk sense. I can't take off in the dark. I don't know this ruddy lake. Even if I did, chances are that we would hit a rock and hole the pontoons."

"But it's a case of life or death!" urged the medical man, thinking only of the surgical side of the problem and in happy ignorance of flying risks.

"What if it is?" Al demanded. "I flew you in . . . You've done all you can. If she's that near gone I figure it's better for her to die than risk all our lives trying to take off this lake in the dark. I know the danger—you don't." Al is daring but never reckless.

"You're not turning yellow, are you, Al?" the doctor taunted him.

"Hell, no!" Al replied angrily. "I'm not yellow but I've got sense. I know what I'm doing. When I fly, I don't

take any unnecessary or foolish risks. Not if I can help it!"

"You'll take a chance for this woman, Al?" the Doctor asked.

"Where is she?"

"The guide and my assistant are carrying her out. They are using a door for a stretcher," the doctor informed him glumly. Then he added, "God, Al! Only an immediate operation can save her life. If we wait until daylight it will be too late . . . I know it."

"O.K.," Al told him. "If you and your pal are willing to risk your ruddy necks I guess I'll risk mine. The only difference is, I know what I'm doing, you fellows don't."

Shortly after the stretcher party arrived with the unconscious woman. The doctor and Al took a look at her in the beam of their flash-lights. Al got in his final dig. He said, "At least she won't know what happened to her if we crash trying to take off."

As tenderly as possible they transferred the injured woman from the make-shift stretcher to the cabin of the plane. While the doctor and his assistant climbed aboard, Al questioned the Indian about the lake and decided how he would try and take off.

He cast loose the plane's moorings and climbed into his seat. The night was at its darkest. Al taxied out carefully towards the centre of the lake. He got the direction of the wind and manoeuvred so that he could obtain the longest run into it.

A few minutes later he was in position and gave her the gas. The lake wasn't so very large. The night was as dark as pitch. Al wondered if he could take off in time to clear the tree-tops at the other end of his run. Then there were the surrounding hills to climb over. He wasn't going to back down now, although his flying experience told him he was taking more than a 50-50 chance.

Al gritted his teeth as he raced over the rippling waters of the lake, half expecting the plane to hit a rock towards the far end before it was air-borne. His luck—the “Cheeseman Luck”—was with him. The plane rose from the water and started to climb. “I don’t know by how much we cleared the trees or the height of land, I could hardly see a damned thing,” he told me. It was still dark when he set the plane down on the water at Port Arthur.

The injured woman was rushed off to the hospital and an operation performed which saved her life.

It wasn’t long before the story got out. The doctor praised Al for his skill and daring. That afternoon the identity of the woman became known. She was a well-known American millionairess. Newspaper reporters besieged Al wanting to get his story at first hand.

Al had to have his little joke. “I had nothing to do with flying the plane back,” he told the reporters. “My Co-Pilot was at the controls.”

“Who was your Co-Pilot?” the news hounds enquired.

“It wouldn’t do you fellows any good if I did tell you his name. You couldn’t get a story out of him, anyway.”

“Want to keep all the credit for yourself,” said one reporter angrily.

“It’s not that,” Al teased him. “You just couldn’t get an interview, that’s all.”

Al sat back and smoked until the members of the Fourth Estate were nearly frantic.

“Aw, come on, Al! Don’t be a heel! Give us the dope. The doctors said you did a great job. The woman is a famous person. It’s news, Al. We owe it to our public. Come on, Al, loosen up! We’ve got to get it to press in time for the morning edition,” they chorused.

Then Al told them what had happened up to the time he started to taxi out from the shore into the lake for the return journey.

"When I climbed into the seat, I said, 'Dear God, take the controls and take us to Port Arthur safely.' He did," Al told them whimsically. "Best Co-Pilot I ever had."

The reporters burst out laughing. It was the same Al Cheeseman having his joke. Then Al added:

"But when we got over Port Arthur I said, 'O.K., Lord, now give me the controls and I'll land her—not that I doubt your ability, but if we do crash land I'll be blamed anyway.'"

In 1937 Cheeseman volunteered to fly Sir Hubert Wilkins during his five months' search for the five Russian fliers who had disappeared from human ken during their attempt to fly over the North Pole. All this nerve-racking work was done without the aid of meteorological services and the instruments of which fliers have the benefit today. It is said of these bush pilots that they fly by the seats of their pants.

And then came the second World War.

CHAPTER 9

Al Cheeseman and His Work as Salvage and Rescue Officer of Goose Bay

WITH the outbreak of war, Al Cheeseman joined up with the R.C.A.F. He enlisted as an L.A.C. He won fairly rapid promotion. Prior to being posted to Goose Bay as Flight Lieutenant, in charge of Rescue and Salvage work, he was attached to Eastern Air Command. He did many anti-submarine patrols off the Atlantic Coast.

Since being posted to Goose Bay he has organized the search and found many of the planes which had failed to show up on schedule.

There was one incident I recall which is typical of many. A big bomber failed to arrive on time. The Senior Officer organized the search in which every available plane was used. Days went by without results. Up to this point Al had been obeying orders and flying according to the instructions issued to him from "Operations". When the time came that all hope was about to be abandoned Al went to his Superior Officer and said, "Sir, if I am in charge of Rescue and Salvage work, I'd like to try out my own ideas. Frankly, I don't think we've gone about this search the right way. I'm here to obey orders . . . but . . . I would like to conduct the search the way I think it should be done."

Al obtained the required permission. He took off immediately. Relying entirely on the uncanny Cheeseman instinct, he located the missing plane and rescued the crew. Afterwards Al gave a logical reason for the way he figured out where the plane would most likely be found.

Since that particular illustration of his extraordinary ability, the Rescue work has been left entirely in his hands. It is on record that during the time he has spent at Goose, the value in planes and equipment salvaged by his department has more than covered the costs of maintaining the Rescue and Salvage section. In addition he has saved many valuable lives.

Not only does he do this particular work but he flies food, provisions, supplies and personnel to R.C.A.F. outposts established within flying range of Goose Bay.

Late in January, 1943, Al was flying from an eastern Canadian Base to Goose when he was forced down in one of the worst blizzards the Meteorological Service has recorded since they became properly organized in the North Country.

"It was just one of those things," Al told me as we sat enjoying a smoke in front of the open fire in the Mess one evening. Cheeseman is one of those men a person can sit and listen to for hours and never grow tired.

"I had to go to Mont Joli from Goose on a special mission. That was last January. We were hoodooed from the very start of that trip. I have seen some bad flying weather, but for sheer cussedness the conditions we met up with on that flight were the ruddy limit.

"I got over the Mealy Mountains all right after leaving Goose. We followed one of the rivers down to the St. Lawrence because my instruments were acting up. Then I headed across the river. I ran into head winds and a blinding blizzard.

"We were thrown about and bumped up and down until it felt as if the wings of the plane would be torn off. I tried to climb up out of the storm but it was so bitterly cold we began to ice up badly. From icing level down I couldn't see a thing. My endurance in that particular plane was ample for the trip but not enough to hang around for hours waiting for the weather to improve," Al explained.

"We were bucking that storm and getting no place fast," Al said humorously. "Then I made up my mind, that if I could make any place at all, it would be Gaspé. I altered course and headed for where I thought Gaspé ought to be. We had taken an awful buffeting. It just felt at the time as if we were a feather being tossed about in the gale of wind. I was watching my fuel gauge pretty anxiously. I was praying for a break in the weather which would enable me to see something. For nearly two hours we had hardly been able to see through the wind-shields.

"Came the time," said Al quietly, "when we had gas enough left for about twenty minutes more flying . . . Then we had to come down whether we liked it or not.

"I did a hell of a lot of praying those last fifteen minutes. To tell the truth, I don't know if I prayed in an orthodox manner, but I sure prayed. As we began to reach the end of our tether I nosed her down easily. I didn't know just what we might crash into. I was looking for somewhere to land but I didn't know if the first land I saw would be underneath me or right dead ahead. I felt reasonably confident that I was near Gaspé.

"If only the storm would abate, and let me see my surroundings, I was certain everything would work out all right. We were still flying blind when we had five minutes to go.

"I figure my prayers were answered . . . The boys all tell me the Devil looks after his own. Be that as it may, there was a break in that storm. I experienced a thrill of happiness and pleasure that was so sharp and sudden it really hurt . . . For there, right ahead of me, was—Gaspe. I landed with about two tablespoons full of gas to spare." Al laughed.

"Then it must have been on the return trip you were forced down? Not while going out?" I asked him. I knew he had been down in the bush ten days, about that time.

"That's right," Al agreed. "I finished my job and started back for Goose. Fine taking off—fair to middling crossing the St. Lawrence—then, once we topped the first height of land, Holy Smoke!—the weather closed down just like a blanket. We'd flown too far to turn back. It was just another of those times when you can make yourself feel good by saying 'Full speed ahead and damn the torpedoes'. It's so damned easy to be brave when you haven't any alternative," Al commented.

"Well . . . there we were. I couldn't go up because of the icing conditions and I couldn't see the ground because of the storm. There's a hell of a lot of stuff passes through your mind when you're in a fix of that kind. The temperature dropped. We iced badly. I was being forced lower and lower every minute we flew. It was obvious we would never be able to climb high enough to cross over the Mealy Mountains and make Goose.

"It wasn't much use flying any further towards Goose—to do so just meant kissing those mountains right slap on the nose . . . I decided to turn and fly east towards the coast. I figured if I had to make a forced landing it might as well be near one of the coastal settlements where we had fuel cached. Then again, I knew the coast pretty well. I figured I might pick up my bearings and fly into Goose up Lake Melville. I wasn't feeling very worried at

this particular time—but I was a few minutes later.” Al continued:

“I spotted a snow-storm, and tried to fly around it. It wasn’t a damn bit of good what I tried to do. That ruddy storm just chased me and hemmed me in as if trying to force me to commit suicide amongst the mountains.

“There wasn’t much I could do about it. There were the mountains to the north and west. There was the ocean to the east. A blizzard raged full force. I hadn’t gas enough to turn back.

“I headed south and east for Cartwright on the Labrador coast. I prayed to God I would get there before the storm closed down in that direction also. I had a couple of hundred miles to fly and a few medium-sized mountains to hop . . . but it looked the best bet.

“Once I make up my mind I never change it—not when I’m in a jam like that. Flying around in circles never got a plane very far. So, with the wind up my skirts I beat it like a bob-tail outta hell. I was determined to try and make Cartwright or Battle Harbour or some other little settlement along the east coast.

“But the Gremlins were busy that day . . . Dodge as I might, that blizzard caught up with me and hemmed me in until I was just closed in tighter than a . . . tighter than a . . .” Al was thinking of the right word that would be permissible in mixed company to explain just how tight a spot he was in. Section Officer Mary Stevens was in the Mess at the time. Then with his typical Cheeseman style he said, “Well, damn it! Just think of the tightest spot you ever got into. That just about describes the situation,” Al said emphatically. In the Mess, if Al came out with one of his famous expressions we said, “He pulled a Cheeseman on so-and-so.” The trouble is that

most of his really hot sayings just won't permit of being repeated in cold print.

"Well, there was snow under me, over me, and all around me," Al continued his yarn. "The mercury decided to go and hide itself. I reckon the bottom dropped out of the glass. There wasn't a damn thing I could do about it. The Gremlins just took my plane in their grasp and iced it up until I was wobbling about like a pelican when its beak holds more than its belly can.

"I thought of the thousands of miles I had flown over the Antarctic . . . and the flights I had made with Wilkins. Five months we spent looking for those Russian fliers who were down somewhere in the Arctic in mid-winter. Often we flew by moonlight or with the aid of the stars when there was no sun. And there we were . . . just making a routine trip, and it looked as if I'd need more luck than I'd ever had before to pull out of the mess we'd gotten into," Al remarked seriously.

"We just couldn't go on any farther—We were literally being forced down by the weight of ice on our wings. A few more minutes and she would be completely out of control. Well, in situations like that it's easy to make up your mind. There's only one thing to do . . . I dood it—I made a forced landing before I bloody well crashed," Al related humorously.

"And Oh! Boy, were we ever a lucky crew! I guess my eyes were popping so far out of their sockets, looking to see something before we hit, you could have knocked them off with a spoon.

"Down we came . . . one thousand . . . seven hundred . . . five hundred . . . three hundred feet, and still we hadn't seen a thing. Just snow . . . flakes as big as the palm of your hand.

"That we came down to ground level over a lake, instead of into trees, or into a hill-side, is just pure, bloody luck," Al claimed.

But Al didn't tell me how he had landed this heavy plane on that frozen lake with hardly any damage to the machine or injury to his crew. I heard that story from one of his crew. One second he was straining his eyes into the murk of a snow-storm seeing nothing . . . The next he thought he saw beneath him an opaqueness of greater intensity than that surrounding him. There was only an instant to grasp the situation and decide. The plane was nearing ground level. It was travelling ninety miles an hour . . . He must land right then and there or in a few more seconds crash into trees or the hill-side.

The fact that Al Cheeseman could think and act quickly enough to take advantage of that fleeting glimpse of earth that indicated he was above a lake covered with ice and snow instead of over ground topped by trees, is proof of his mental agility. The fact that, with only a matter of split seconds in which to act, he landed that ice-covered land plane without seriously cracking it up is extraordinary. The additional fact that he did not kill or even seriously injure his crew is proof of his ability as a pilot. What followed the forced landing proved Al's knowledge as an experienced "Bushman".

I have pieced together the story of Al's ten days spent in the wilderness from what Flying Officer Tom Cummings told me, and from casual conversations with his crew. Tom Cummings was one of the rescue party and is an experienced woodsman and a good artist.

Al was always trying to impress on every pilot flying over the sub-Arctic and Arctic wilderness the absolute necessity of being properly prepared to meet any emergency. I have heard him time and again tell young fighter pilots: "You do as I tell you. Follow my advice or, one of

these days you're going to be sorry. You can't follow flying as a profession without experiencing crashes. You're bound to be forced down some time or other. Being a good pilot doesn't mean being able to handle a "joy-stick" and fly a plane. It means being a good all-round man."

When Al Cheeseman was forced down in the Norseman he christened the "Hookensniffie" he was on a frozen lake near Sandwich Bay, Labrador. He had with him as crew Cpl. G. A. Nimmons of Peterboro, Ont., and L.A.C. G. A. Landry of Moncton, N.B. I was never able to learn from Al or his crew why the plane was christened "Hookensniffie" or what the word meant. That is a secret between Al and his crew, which is well kept.*

The plane's radio was smashed in the landing. There was nothing to do but make themselves as comfortable as possible and wait until help arrived. Cheeseman can make himself comfortable as a bug in a rug winter or summer no matter where he lands. He boasts that he never goes up unless he is prepared to come down, anyhow, any old place.

I was on Cheeseman Lake with Al one day about 200 miles from the nearest civilization when I heard the story of what happened after the "Hookensniffie" was forced down.

"The Eskimos, the natives of Labrador, and the Indians all know how to exist in country which to the ordinary man means death within a few hours or a few days at the latest," Al remarked. "There is really no reason why a crew forced down should perish if they carry proper emergency equipment and have the necessary knowledge and bush experience. There we were, down, God alone knew where, but I wasn't worried. I

*I was told the secret by Al's wife just prior to this work being published—but I must respect the confidence.

never fly over uninhabited country without the following equipment: I take plenty of matches; a lamp and oil fuel; a light-weight tent; a small collapsible stove weighing about two and a half pounds, pipe included; a good eider-down sleeping-bag; snow-shoes; a light rifle; ammunition; fishing tackle; a supply of emergency rations, oatmeal, corn syrup, bacon or salt pork, dried beans, flour, sugar, baking powder, salt and coffee. I also carry a heavy hunting-knife, a frying-pan, tea pail, a boiling-kettle, cup, tin plate, forks and spoons, dish cloths and first-aid supplies. Sounds a lot of junk to cart along, but properly chosen the gross weight is only about fifty pounds per person," Al told me.

"It was good and cold when we scrambled out of the plane. It couldn't have been less than 35 below zero. The first thing one must do is to get a fire going—and get it going quick. Get the fire started before you mess around fixing up injuries or giving first aid—that is, unless it is necessary to stop arterial bleeding. The first few minutes after you land in zero weather are of the utmost importance," Al explained.

"Keep your wits about you and work fast and methodically. First find the matches, next pick out a good dry, dead tree, and start to chop. Cut plenty of small stuff, gather some moss or birchbark, or whittle some very fine shavings. You will learn from experience that everything in the woods won't burn, that is why I say keep your head and only use what you know will burn, and above all *build* your fire carefully.

"An experienced bushman can often find 'fatwood' with which to make a fire even in the pouring rain. 'Fatwood' is the remains of an old pine tree that has rotted due to exposure. The reason the 'fatwood' remains after the rest of the tree has rotted is because it is full of resin and turpentine. To look at it one would take it to be an

old sodden piece of wood. If you pick it up it feels heavy as lead, but if you cut into it with your knife you can see and smell the resin. It will light and burn even when the rain is pelting down and a gale is blowing. The Indians make torches out of 'fatwood'. It was burning slivers of 'fatwood' the Indians drove into their victims' flesh when torturing them, because they wouldn't blow out. 'Fatwood' is literally impregnated with inflammable chemicals. I have actually boiled a kettle in three minutes after picking up a piece in the woods. Another thing it is well to remember is that green ash will burn. If you can't find anything dry and you can find ash, cut into the heart of the tree and make shavings out of the heart. They'll burn well enough to start a fire.

"If you don't get your fire going first thing, your fingers may freeze, you will become clumsy, and finally you will be helpless. I've seen men cut themselves using an axe just because their fingers had grown numb. A cut in the leg from an axe is something to worry about in the woods. Then again I've seen inexperienced men nearly chop off their own ears because they didn't take time to clear away twigs and branches that may hook the axe when they are chopping. It is knowing about small things like these that often means the difference between life and death when you are down in the wilderness," Al warned me.

"Don't rush the job building your fire. Start it well. Make sure it is going to burn. Have plenty of small stuff handy. Build the small stuff around the kindling log-cabin fashion—don't just pile it on any old way. Piling it log-cabin fashion gives plenty of draught and makes sure the flames catch hold no matter how the winds shift or the draught blows. Keep plenty of slivers of the driest wood handy and, if necessary, blow the tiny flame gently or fan it with a plate. Don't use your hat or you'll have frozen

ears. Don't pile on big stuff until you have plenty of embers and heat. Once the fire is really going well, place long logs over it. Push the ends in on the fire as they burn through. It saves a lot of chopping. Sceptics may convince themselves of the soundness of this advice by trying to build a fire in four feet of snow during a blizzard when the thermometer is 50 below.

"Once the fire is going well, attend to any physical injuries. Next set up the tent. Choose a spot well sheltered by the trees. If you haven't a sheet-metal stove, then you must set up your tent facing a big boulder or at the foot of a cliff facing it. Any rock formation with perpendicular or slightly overhanging walls will do. They will reflect the heat. The best type of tent is a light ten-pound wall tent about 7 feet by 9 feet, not larger. Heavier and larger tents are too difficult to set up quickly or when alone, or when injured men require attention.

"Shovel away the snow—snow-shoes will do the trick. Then lay a floor of spruce boughs at least six inches thick. If you really want to be comfortable lay your floor carefully. Start at the edge. Drive the cut end of the bough into the ground or the snow and then force the soft feathery parts down flat. Work around, covering the cut ends with the soft feathery parts like one shingles a barn. If you do this you will have more comfort than a beauty-rest mattress provides. If you don't do it you will never have a moment's rest when lying down. Unless spruce boughs are laid properly the ends will stick into your ribs and spine.

"To rig the tent cut five poles 6 inches in diameter. Cut them about 10 feet long. Lash two pairs together near the top so that when they are spread apart the lashing will be a little higher than the top of the tent. Set up the two end frames and then lash the ridge pole between them, resting it in the crotch of the end frames.

Next lash the tent to the ridge poles and then peg it down. If you want to keep warm and have the full benefit of your little stove, bank around both sides and the back end of the tent at least 2 feet high with snow. Another thing to watch is that you put plenty of snow around the base of the frame poles. If you don't, the wind is apt to pick up your tent and carry it away like a balloon. Once I lived in a tent for seven days. It blew a full gale without a let-up the whole time. The temperature never rose above 35 below zero. It's not much use making a good forced landing if you perish from exposure afterwards," Al told me with the air of a true philosopher.

"The little stove is the next thing to set up. I've had a lot of 'Smart Alecs' jeer about my advocating carrying a stove. It only weighs 2½ pounds and it means all the difference between solid comfort and solid death. The Montagnais Indians and the Nascopie Indians travel the length and breadth of Labrador and live in tents winter and summer alike. All they ever use for heating their tents and cooking with, is a small sheet-metal stove which only measures 8" x 10" x 24". It knocks down flat when not in use.

"The stove should be set up on rocks at least 6 inches above the floor of the tent. If rocks are not available then use green logs. Make sure the set up is fire-proof. It is surprising how many Indians and their children have come to the R.C.A.F. hospital requiring treatment for burns. The tent should be fitted with a proper asbestos-lined hole for the stove pipe, or else it should be fitted with a metal collar. The best place for the stove is towards the back of the tent.

"As soon as the tent is ready for occupation bring in the sleeping-bags and provisions. The sleeping-bags make comfortable seats. Bears, wolves and wolverines just love

provisions, particularly bacon and sweet-stuff. If you want to go hungry just leave them outside your tent.

"Now, there are a few don'ts to remember when you are forced down in cold weather. Don't stand around if your socks are wet even if only from perspiration; if you do your feet will freeze. Don't stand around in wet clothes even if your underwear is only damp from perspiration. Strip off in the warmth of the fire and dry both your body and your clothes. If you don't you'll develop pneumonia. Don't forget to take your boots into the sleeping-bag with you. It is likely the temperature will drop to around 30 below in the vicinity of your bed during the night, and your boots will be frozen before morning. Frozen boots cause sore feet.

"With regard to snow-shoes, take them into the tent with you—don't leave them outside especially if there are huskies around. They just love to bite off deerskin thongs, harness, or anything else they can chew. Be careful what you drink. It is better to obtain water or ice from a lake or stream than to drink snow-water. With some people snow-water acts as a strong purgative. It is wiser to drink water that has been boiled.

"The food recommended may not sound very appetizing, but when you are forced down in the wilderness one eats to live; you don't live to eat. The foods chosen provide a maximum amount of heat, energy and nourishment for the quantity eaten.

"Cooking equipment should be simplicity itself. One 'steeper' for tea or coffee; one empty lard or honey pail for cooking porridge or stew, one frying-pan for cooking flapjacks, baking-powder biscuits, or bannock. Never on any account pack provisions in paper bags. All food must be carried in cloth, skin, or light metal containers. Glass-ware and pottery should be left behind and aluminum, enamel or tin-ware substituted.

"A high-power .22 or .25 rifle is best because it is light and more ammunition can be carried. Rabbits, ptarmigan, and small game can be found in most parts of Labrador. At short range a .22 will bring down a deer if you hit it in the right place.

"If there isn't a stove included in the outfit, it is essential that the tent or shelter be set up facing a wall of rock or in front of a large boulder. The boulder or rock face should be as high as the tent or shelter, and if it is at all possible the top of the rock or boulder should slope out beyond the base towards the tent or shelter.

"By building a good fire at the base of the rock the over-hang will make it act like a dutch oven and throw the heat towards the tent. I have slept perfectly comfortably, in freezing weather and without blankets or other extra covering, with only a canoe for shelter. I placed the canoe on its side facing the fire I had built under the over-hanging rock. I next cut my spruce boughs and made my bed in the canoe facing the fire. I banked the back of the canoe around thoroughly to keep out the draught. Beavers had very kindly cut me plenty of firewood. Small birch and poplar lay all around the campsite. After I had made a really good fire I hauled about a dozen good-sized logs near my shelter. I piled half of them on the fire. The only discomfort I experienced was that once during the night I had to get up and move farther back from the fire because I was too warm. The next time I awoke I had to get up to put more logs on the fire. This was a simple matter—I just took the unburnt ends and threw them on first then added more larger ones.

"When making camp and living in tents never put food, clothing, or equipment down on the ground or the floor of the tent. Hang up your equipment on the limbs of trees. It is ever so easy to lose a valuable knife, or an

axe in four feet of snow. They are devilish hard to find again, and their loss is no joke. Silly little mistakes like misplacing an axe in the bush may make all the difference between life and death. Axe handles break easily in low temperature. Go easy on them. If you have any Very lights save them until you see a plane or person. It doesn't help much just giving the wolves a pyrotechnical display," Al joked.

"In wintertime up north it is almost necessary to have some kind of light because the nights are so long. Candles are easily made if you have any kind of animal fat. Render down the fat. Cut a stick the size you want to make the candle. Then make a hole into well-packed snow with the stick. Fasten a split shot to a piece of cotton string or a thread or two of lamp wick, and drop the shot down the hole. Then pour the fat into the hole when it is cold but just before it begins to solidify. When the fat is solid break away the snow. Good night-lights can be made by pouring fat into the necessary shaped depressions in the snow and holding the wick in position until the fat sets. A forked stick makes an excellent candle-holder. Place the candle in the fork of the stick and tie some rag or string around it. Force the sharpened end of the stick into the ground or the snow.

"Always try to leave the plane in the lee of an island if possible. Secure the plane no matter where it is by chopping hollows into the ice or ground. Fasten the end of the mooring lines to blocks of wood. Place the blocks of wood into the hollows and fill them with water. The water will freeze and hold the blocks securely. The wings of the plane can then be lashed down with the free ends of the mooring lines. I also advise placing eight-inch logs under the skis. They should be put under the front first and the rear last. The engine should be 'deluted' and covered if possible. Always keep the snow swept off the

plane. It is almost impossible to see a snow-covered plane from the air. Tents may be pegged down the same way.

"Personally," Al told me in conclusion, "I always carry a pack of cards along with me. It helps pass the time away while you are waiting for rescue. Above all, don't leave your plane unless you have provisions and are properly equipped to travel in the kind of country in which you land. If you must leave the plane follow a river down. The trappers travel up the rivers in the fall and down the rivers in the spring and the rivers will always bring you to the sea sooner or later."

When Al and his companions were forced down near Sandwich Bay in February, 1943, they were located on the tenth day by a young bush pilot named Roy, who was flying for Quebec Airways. A rescue plane was immediately flown in. Group Captain Evans, F.O. Cummings, F.O. Izzard of Mimico, Ont., F.O. Gilbert Love of Vancouver, and Flight-Lieut. Peverself of the R.C.A.F. Medical Corps were among those who flew in on the rescue mission.

Circling over the crashed plane the rescue party saw no sign of life. They feared the worst had happened to Al and his crew. The rescue plane landed and the party examined the plane. They saw that the crew had not been killed when it crashed. Then they spotted the tent. It looked cold and lonely in that great wilderness. There was no smoke . . . no sound . . . no movement. The rescue party approached slowly. Each one hung back, waiting for the other to go ahead and uncover the grim tragedy of the Northland. Finally, they stood outside the flap of the tent. They nearly jumped out of their flying clothes when Al shouted at the top of his lusty voice, "Why in hell are you all standing outside there in the cold like a ruddy group of statues? Come into the tent and have a cup of coffee . . . or aren't you staying for a while?"

Al had to have his joke. He had seen Roy's plane, and knew Roy had seen the "Hookensniffie" by the way he circled the lake over the plane. When the rescue party arrived he and his crew hid in the tent to make the others believe they had arrived too late. Al claimed he and his companions could have lived without undue hardship for another month or six weeks.

Al Cheeseman flew the "Hookensniffie" back to Goose after the necessary repairs had been made and she had been refuelled.

* * * * *

A good story is told of an American bomber which crashed about 200 miles from Goose. The plane became storm-bound and ran out of fuel. The pilot made a very good landing on a lake which was frozen over. A salvage crew flew in with fuel, intending to fly the other bomber out again, but both got snowed in by a blizzard.

The Commanding Officer of the U.S.A.A.F., Goose Bay, was at that time Colonel A .D. Smith, an old-timer in the flying game. He decided that something had to be done about it. Bill Durrell, Al and the Colonel flew in to look over the situation. They landed on skis.

There was nothing to it—at least not as far as they were concerned. They returned to Goose, loaded one of Bill Durrell's big tractors into another bomber, threw in the necessary shovels, scrapers, plough-blades etc. and took off to where the other two bombers were snow-bound.

They made a perfect landing. The machinery was unloaded without mishap. The tractor was fuelled and in less than an hour an ice runway was being carved out of the frozen snow the length of the lake. It wasn't a runway as long as might be desired, but it was worthy of a try. Bomber number one was serviced and taxied into position at the far end of the lake. It was one of those still cold winter days with hardly any wind. This was

disappointing and added to the danger taking off. The airmen had prayed for a good wind to blow up or down the lake. They could then have taken off into it and become air-borne so much more quickly.

To delay the attempted take-off in order to wait for wind was not considered advisable. Another blizzard might undo all their hard work, or a sudden thaw (it was nearing the spring break-up) might deposit the three bombers at the bottom of the lake. The only way to get them out was to fly them off the ice.

Number One crew was told off to make the try. The runway wasn't too bad and it wasn't too good. The big bomber bumped and waddled like a goose fattened ready for Thanksgiving dinner, as it taxied into position. The spectators were watching anxiously. They held their breath and stood with their fingers crossed . . . Would she or wouldn't she make it?

She made it but only by the very narrowest of margins.

"That plane will never take off with that tractor aboard," one man volunteered his opinion.

"And it won't damn well try," Colonel Smith retorted. The other two planes got off safely. The tractor is still out there in the wilds.

* * * * *

One of the planes bound from Goose to "The other side" failed to show up. Fortunately, in this particular case the radio was still able to function but could only send a limited distance. The crew didn't know exactly where they had crashed except that the pilot had picked a spot close to the shore of a large lake somewhere on the Greenland ice-cap.

Exceptionally good radio conditions finally enabled their distress message to be heard. Bearings were taken of their signals, and a rough idea of their location was

obtained. What puzzled those who were planning the search was the fact that there was definitely no large lake mapped or reported in the position from which the crashed plane was sending the signals.

"We are down on the shore of a large lake. Mountains of ice are all around us. Our altitude when forced down was over 10,000 feet." That was the gist of the message received from the missing fliers.

There didn't seem much doubt that the bomber was down on the Greenland ice-cap. A relative of mine who went with Peary in quest of the North Pole in 1893-94 told me of this ice-cap. He claimed it was formed by heavy falls of snow which had continued for a period of thousands of years. As the temperature never rises above freezing the snow had filled all the mountain valleys and increased in depth until it became level with the mountain-peaks. Finally, even the peaks themselves were buried under snow. He claimed that at the turn of the present century the highest mountain-peak in north Greenland was more than a thousand feet below the snow level of the ice-cap.

The ice-cap does exist. Peary called it "His Imperial Highway to the Pole". The difficulty with which it is travelled and the dangers that have to be faced while attempting to cross the ice-cap can better be imagined than described. It took Peary until 1908 to conquer the Arctic and discover the North Pole. He had been trying for nearly twenty years.

Al Cheeseman says, "When down in the wilderness, unless properly equipped to travel, stay with the plane." Generally speaking, that is sound advice. It is most difficult to observe anything so minute as a man from the air. These fliers I refer to stuck by their plane and suffered severe hardship from exposure but they were

finally rescued. The rescue plane found the mystery lake and landed on floats.

All this was very interesting. Information of that nature is very important. A lake is another land-mark that will often help pilots establish their position when they are driven off course by weather conditions. A few days after the rescue had been made, a party was sent out in another plane to take pictures of the lake, fix its position, and salvage what instruments they could from the damaged plane.

It was an interesting assignment. The Arctic summer was just beginning. They were going to fly over a new continent of ice. Off they set in high spirits, but, when they reached the position "Operations" had pinpointed on their flight plan they could find no lake, and they could locate no plane.

They were a very sorely worried party of airmen. They didn't appreciate having to return to base and report they couldn't find a lake, particularly when it was only a matter of days since the crew of the crashed bomber had been picked up from that very lake.

They circled and circled in ever-widening circles. They fumed and they swore, but no lake could they see. There was nothing but ice and snow everywhere. There were ridges; there were crevices; there were all kinds of snow and ice formation—but there most certainly was no lake. Fuel was running low before they finally gave up the search and returned to base, a very subdued and chastened crew.

"Couldn't find that damn lake anywhere," the pilot told the Operations officer. "No use arguing. It just isn't there." He was very put out over the incident.

But the Operations officer did argue. "It was there three days ago. It must be there now," he threw back.

"Hell! I couldn't miss finding a lake if the position you gave me is correct. Conditions were perfect today," the pilot answered angrily.

"No use getting hot under the collar," the Operations officer retorted. "We'll send Shorty out tomorrow . . . He'll find it."

"Perhaps he will—and perhaps he won't. Here's a bunch of dough that says he won't! Want to take a bet? I'll wager all or any part of this roll that Shorty doesn't find either the lake or the plane within 100 miles of the position you gave me."

"Think I'll wait until Shorty gets back tomorrow," "Ops" said cautiously.

"You're one hell of a sport," the pilot retorted angrily. "You're convinced the ruddy lake is there, and you're afraid to bet. I'm willing to stake every cent I own that neither Shorty nor anyone else will find a lake or the missing plane in the position you gave me."

Finally the bets were made and taken. Shorty left next day on the same mission but he found no lake. It would appear in the light of subsequent knowledge that what happened then has been witnessed often before by explorers. The sun is never warm enough to melt the ice-cap itself, but it is strong enough to melt some of the snow on the south sides of the mountains. This snow-water flows downward seeking its own level. It is finally caught in a basin or valley between the hills and forms a lake. Often the snow and ice upon which the body of water forms is hollow underneath. The pressure of ice above on the mountain-sides; the weight of the water and the steepage, causes the bottom of the artificial lake to collapse. A gigantic fissure opens up between the mountain-sides and the water crashes downwards to work and worm its way seaward.

I have heard natives say that it is on these subterranean streams or rivers that the glaciers move slowly towards the sea. I have seen streams pouring out from under snow and ice near the shore-line. These streams must find their way through the cracks in the rock formations.

* * * * *

In May, 1943, Al Cheeseman and his crew made their "mercy flights" from Goose Bay to Nain and other villages located farther north on the Labrador coast. Word had been received at the R.C.A.F. headquarters that several native tribes were in danger of extinction due to famine and disease.

Al's plane was loaded with provisions, medical stores, and the usual emergency supplies. L.A.C. Landry told me that in all the rescue work he had done with Cheeseman he had never seen sights so heart-rending as those he saw when they landed on skis to distribute food and medicine to the unfortunate natives in those isolated villages.

The Eskimos up north and the Indians farther south suffered from an acute shortage of food during the winter of 1942-43. Malnutrition so lowered their vitality and resistance to disease that they contracted influenza, meningitis, and other white man's diseases. The attacks were so severe that as many as twenty to fifty per cent of the population of the small settlements died before aid reached them. When Al Cheeseman stepped out of his plane at one village, only three men out of the whole population of nearly 100 souls could stagger towards the much-needed supply plane. Flying Officer Tom Cummings presented me with an etching he burnt into wood commemorating this pitiful scene.

In the huts and tents Al's crew found the rest of the population. They were crowded, about a dozen people

in each shack or tent, to conserve fuel. "I looked into tents," Landry told me, "where the occupants were so far gone they just lay there indifferent to their surroundings, taking no notice of anything. Their eyes were sunk away back into the sockets. Their cheek-bones were sticking out through the skin. Some of them were covered with sores. Scurvy, I guess! Others were coughing blood which drooled down from their lips because they hadn't strength enough left to spit over to the tiny stove. Babies died. Their mothers were so starved they couldn't feed them. Older children had been kept alive on a mixture of flour, molasses, and water. That's a helluva diet for kids three to twelve months old," Landry commented, then continued his story. "That's all there was to give them until we arrived. The strange thing about it is that some of them actually survived. I often wonder how the experts, who advise the public how to eat and how to run baby clinics and feed their children, would explain the way these native survive on their diets and even grow into strong healthy men and women.

"Do you know," he queried, "from what I hear, these Eskimos hardly ever died from disease until white men went amongst them? They usually died with their boots on—hunting-accidents, snow-slides, drowning, got lost in blizzards, or died of old age . . . but never from T.B., flu, and the likes of that."

"How did they come to get into the plight in which you found them?" I asked Al's "Man Friday".

"All I know is what I've heard. The official explanation is that the winter was very severe and the hunting bad. You might get an interesting yarn from the Hudson's Bay factor. Ask him how it happened that the Hudson's Bay Company closed all their trading posts and pulled out of that particular section of the country, lock, stock, and barrel . . . To my way of thinking the natives couldn't

have got into such a pitiful condition if the Hudson's Bay Company hadn't pulled up stakes and left them on their own. It is typical of native honesty that even in one settlement where the H.B. had left stores locked up in the Post, the natives wouldn't touch them without first obtaining permission. That's how damned honest they are. They were never known to steal or tell a lie when the white man first discovered them."

I was to see with my own eyes many survivors of this winter tragedy. I saw them in the middle of September getting ready to set out for their hunting-grounds. Each winter they have to secure their meat and sufficient fur to trade for provisions and food with the Hudson's Bay Company. Even when I saw them they looked more like people ready to die than to face the rigours of a winter out in the wilderness.

I met Father O'Brien, missionary to the Indians, who, in the particular area I refer to, are all Roman Catholics. Sixteen children between the ages of one month and twelve years had died. The camp of the tribe I visited numbered only 140 souls. I saw four sick Indians in one tent. Eight others occupied the same tent. They were silent and uncomplaining. One little girl was running a high fever. An old squaw was lying in one corner under a blanket, completely covered, head and all. She coughed and coughed until it sickened one to hear the poor old soul. Another little girl was hunch-backed. She was just a bag of bones, and so badly deformed that she could hardly walk. But the whole tribe, the sick, the halt, and the lame all hit the trail. The strong and robust survive, the others die.

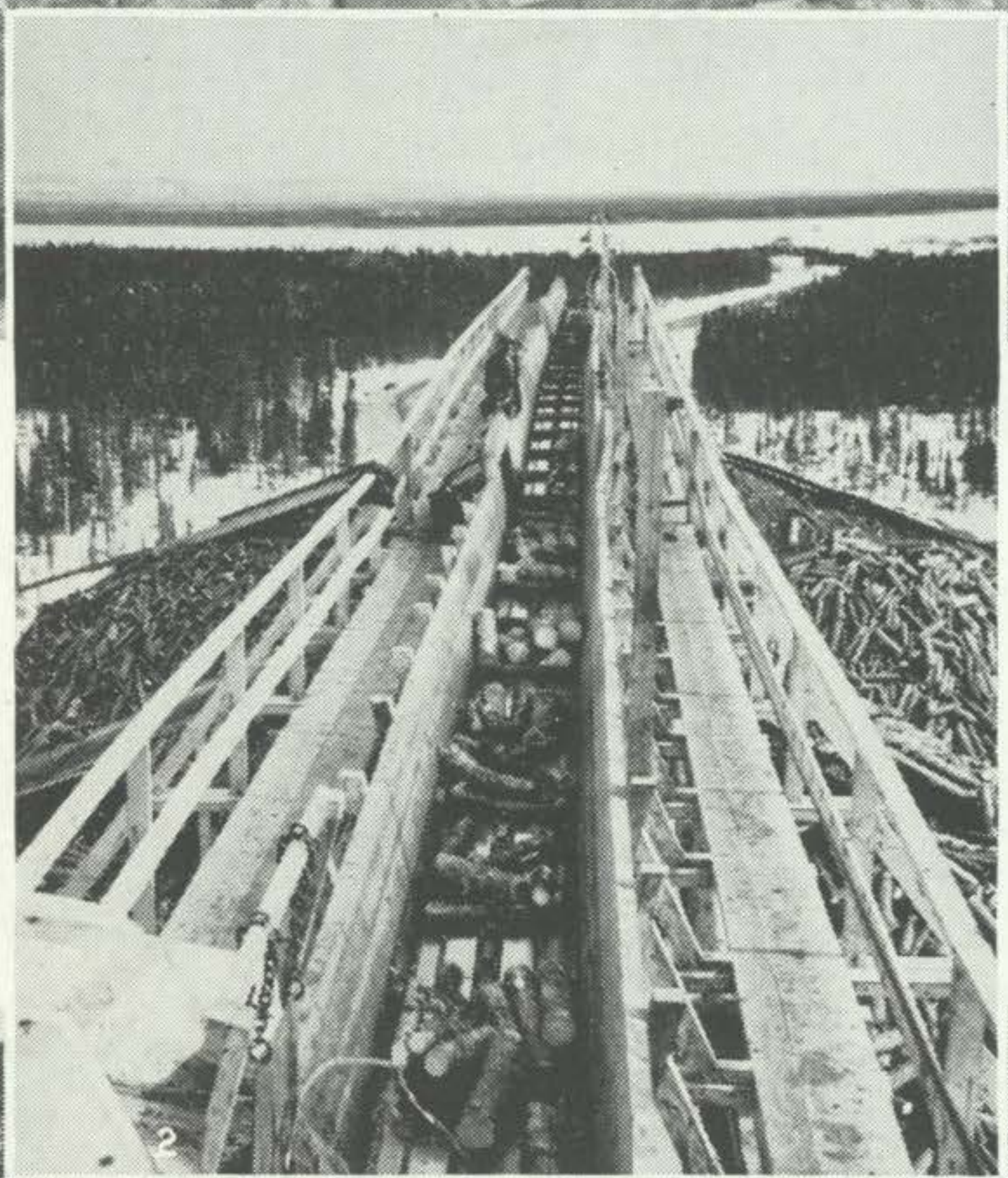
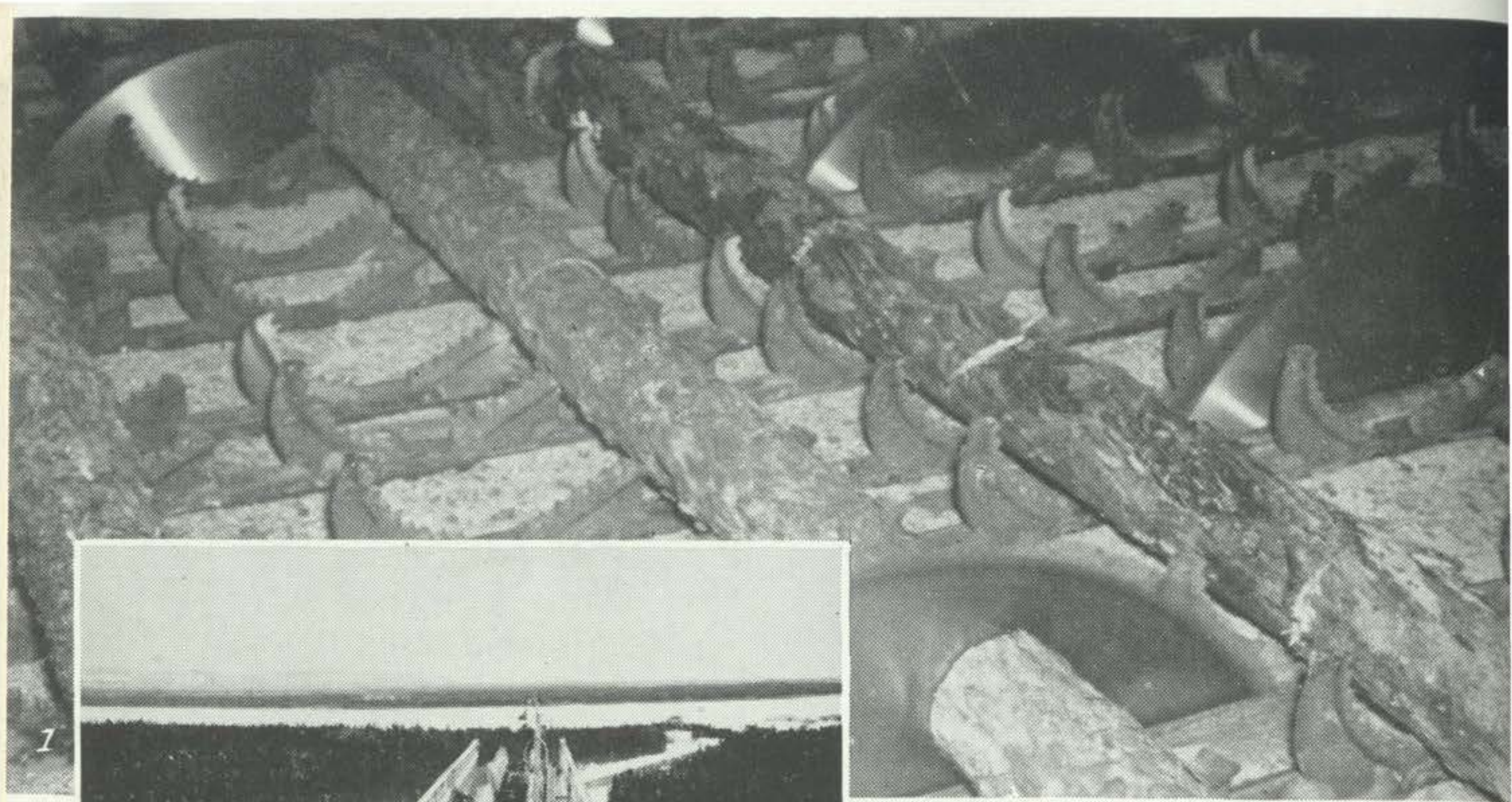
Those I visited intended paddling up the rivers in canoes until the freeze-up came, that fall. They lived in light canvas tents winter and summer alike. After the freeze-up they abandon the canoes and proceed on snow-

shoes. Each family, consisting of grandfather and grandmother, father and mother and children, separate when they reach their own particular hunting-ground. Usually each family goes up the tributary off the main river, leading up into the hills. They hunt up in the water-shed. They live isolated from the rest of the world until January. In January they travel all the way out to civilization again to obtain fresh supplies from the Hudson's Bay Trading Posts. They can't take enough with them the first trip in to last them the winter. After staying at the trading post for a short rest they hike back into the woods and remain there until just before the thaw in the spring. They usually arrive back at the trading post about the end of May or beginning of June. One or two young bucks stay behind to bring the canoes down the river. All the others make the journey on foot, hauling their sleds. I saw one old man following behind a sled holding onto a line. He was blind. Another old chap was just about on his last legs. He made the grade into North West River, but died three days after his arrival. It was claimed this old buck had refused to be left behind in January. Other members of the tribe stated that he hadn't had a bowel movement in nearly three months before he died. That is something the medical profession can argue over. I heard one doctor claim there were cases on record of people who only had one bowel movement every three weeks. There can be no argument over the fact that he died within three hours of taking a dose of white man's medicine. It is quite possible under the circumstances that he would have died even if he hadn't taken the medicine.

With this particular tribe I saw returning down the Hamilton River from their hunting-grounds, was a party dragging some boxes made out of rough-hewn boards. Inquiry illicit the information that the boxes contained



Lumbering Operations in Labrador.
(Top) Cutting in bush; (centre) Loading; (bottom) Feeding to mill.



More Lumbering Operations

(Top) Log-cutting operation; (centre) Logs on conveyer belt;
(bottom) Piled for use.

the remains of children who had died while on the trail. They, their parents, were bringing them back so they might have Christian burial. Their faith is so strong. Every female in the tribe wore a big Crucifix over her outer garment. It hung from a chain or string around her neck, an outward sign of her great inward faith. And yet these Christians live under such terrible conditions.

What a challenge to our civilization!

Father O'Brien has been spiritual adviser to these Indians for many years. Each year he comes up to Labrador on the S.S. *Kyle* or one of the other Newfoundland Government steamers which trade up and down the Labrador coasts during the summer season. He knows more about the Indians, their language, their tribal habits and their lives than any other living man. Obviously he is popular and highly respected by the Indians. They wouldn't think of failing to turn up at one or another of his calling-places each summer. They know exactly where they will find him and if he happens to be a week or a month late, what does it matter? It would be impossible for him to try and locate the widely separated sections of the various Indian tribes, so they go to meet him.

"It looks to me, Father, as if your Indian friends are very strong in their faith and very weak in their constitutions. Is there nothing that can be done to help them?" I asked him, in the R.C.A.F. Mess one evening after dinner.

"They are very independent. They don't want to be helped," he replied.

"But it is terrible to see them racked with disease, dragging themselves over hundreds of miles of wilderness trails in order to earn the most meagre existence," I argued.

"That is the only life they know . . . It is the only life they love. They are content and happy within them-

selves. They don't want to live as white men live. It is the life they are used to living," he replied.

This seemed a very unsympathetic attitude for a priest to adopt towards his spiritual charges and I said, "Well, then, Father, it is obvious that under the present conditions the Celestial Indian population is increasing rapidly, while the earthly population is very rapidly decreasing. Your attitude is that it is your duty to look after their souls and let them look after their own bodies."

"Our experience has gone to show that no good has ever resulted from meddling with their way of life, or with their methods of living. If they are worse off today than they were fifty years ago it is because they have adopted some of the white man's habits and methods of eating and living," the priest replied.

It is quite a problem. Just what is the best thing to do? Perhaps Father O'Brien is right. One thing is certain. He loves his Indians and his Indians love and respect him. His ideas about not interfering with their methods of living are supported by educated "Natives" I talked to afterwards.

Charlie Chalk, the native pilot for Lake Melville, told me: "The Indians are nomads. They don't want to live in any one place. They want to be left alone to live in peace. They wander from North West River in Labrador as far away as Seven Islands, near Clark City, on the St. Lawrence. I personally don't think they would survive if enclosed in any limited space. They don't blame the white man for their ills and disease. It is the Evil Spirit causes their troubles. Misfortunes, they claim, are sent to try them and test their faith."

I shook my head. His arguments might be sound but it doesn't seem right that any human beings should live in such misery and suffering, even if they do submit patiently and without complaint. Perhaps that is their

trouble. They may be too patient. If they cried out aloud to High Heaven perhaps something might be done to help them save their race from extinction.

"Do you know, Commander, I've lived all my life in these parts and my parents before me," Charlie Chalk told me. "The Indians were fine people until recent years. I can trace the change in their health and appearance to the time they began to adopt the ways and eat the food of white men about 50 years ago. They were a different race when they ate an all-meat-and-fruit diet, and lived in skin tents. I may be wrong, but since they began to eat sugar and flour and live in canvas tents they have just gone down hill."

"You support the theory of the authorities who are responsible for the welfare of the Lapps in northern Europe," I told him, and explained: "In Northern Europe, the authorities are educating the Laplanders. They are teaching them how to take advantage of modern methods to improve their hunting and trapping methods, but they are not permitting them to change their method of living or their way of life. Even the children attending school must live at home under normal conditions, in their regular native surroundings. Cleanliness and hygiene have been taught but only applied to improve their own way of living which centuries of experience have proven to be best for the climate."

The natives (I refer to the people of Labrador who are descended from whites who settled on the shores of Labrador and married native women) seem to have a great respect for the Hudson's Bay factors. They "Yes, sir" them and touch the peaks of their caps when passing them. Generally speaking, they look up to the factors as gentlemen much higher in the social scale of life than they class themselves.

They sell the factors their salmon at 3 cents a pound and buy back gasoline at 75 cents a gallon. I paid \$3.50 for five gallons and got mostly water. They sell them furs for a tenth of their value and buy back tinned goods, tobacco, and sugar, flour, etc. at exceedingly high prices. I decided to ask one of the factors I met just what his side of the story was about the natives up north who died of disease and starvation during the winter of 1942-43. After the usual preliminaries I said, "I was told to ask you why the Hudson's Bay Company closed about eight trading posts farther north last year?" (That was 1942.)

"Because they weren't making any money," came the very clear-cut and practical answer.

"Do you mind telling me why they stopped making money?" I asked.

"Because the Indians and natives no longer brought in enough fur to make it profitable to keep the posts open. We still open one or two of them for a limited period each summer, but it doesn't pay to keep them open all the year round. The Company lost over \$500,000 before they decided to close down posts to which you refer," the factor informed me.

"Didn't the fact that the lives of several hundred natives depended on the decision to close the posts have any weight during the discussions?" I asked him.

"It was just a question of policy. The Hudson's Bay Company is a commercial organization formed for the purpose of making money. They have to pay dividends to share-holders and investors. If you, in private life, had stores all over a city and one in a certain locality didn't pay, you would close it—wouldn't you?"

"Quite true . . . but . . . the Hudson's Bay Company received certain privileges and concessions from the Canadian and Newfoundland Governments under which they reaped the harvest of fur throughout the whole

Canadian North. The Indians and trappers were your harvesters—they made your business profitable for many years. Don't you think the Company was under some obligation to them? Do you think it was right to just pull out and leave them to starve?" I queried.

"The Company didn't do that . . . Two years ago it was decided we would have to close down certain trading posts which were operating at a heavy loss. We notified the Newfoundland Government of our intentions. It was up to them to take care of the natives—they are their charge and their responsibility, not the Hudson's Bay Company's."

One day I met a famous character of the North. We will call him Old Mac.

"What happened that the catch of fur fell off until it was no longer profitable for the Hudson's Bay Company to trade at Nain and other posts last winter?" I asked him.

"Well, if you want my personal opinion, I'd say it was the Moravian missionaries. About all they've done is teach the natives a lot of high notions about religion. They have turned the Indians into a scummy lot of lazy and unreliable rascals. There was a day when a native wouldn't lie and he wasn't dishonest." (I was tempted to say 'That must have been the day when the traders put it over the natives like a blanket,' but I kept silent. This conversation might become very interesting if continued on a friendly footing.)

"The missionaries taught them to be dishonest and lie?" I questioned incredulously.

"I didn't say that," my companion retorted.

"Pardon my stupidity, but that is what I understood you to imply. Perhaps you will be good enough to explain the situation."

"What I mean is that the Moravian missionaries, in their desire to teach the natives religion, have opened

schools and weaned them to the Missions away from the woods and forests which is the natives' natural surroundings. When a young Indian or native has finished his education he is of no use to himself or his tribe," Old Mac stated very definitely. "The young Indian, or the young Eskimo, educated by the missionaries, might have learned how to prove the Divinity of Christ, or that the Blessed Mary was a Virgin, or that there are Three Persons in one God, but I'm damned if he could set a snare which would catch a rabbit or a trap that will catch a fox, even if he was starving to death. After the missionaries are through with the boys and girls they turn them loose and they have to be taught the things they need to know in order to live off the wilderness by their parents. The North is no place for those who love ease, comfort, and luxury. To survive in the North you must work hard. The educated natives didn't take kindly to hardship, hard work, and rigid self-discipline after living the life of Reilly at the Mission school. They just wanted to hang around the Missions or the settlements. In fact, they'd rather do anything except live the life God intended them to live. If he hadn't, He'd never have allowed them to be born in Labrador or the Arctic."

"But hasn't a human being the right to decide what kind of life he wants to lead?" I questioned.

"He has if he can afford to choose," Old Mac replied. "In their case they ask the Hudson's Bay Company for credit. They buy goods upon which to live, but they never brought into the trading posts enough fur to pay their debts. It was just a case of going further and further into the red until the Company had about \$500,000 in bad debts to write off. They wrote most of them off when they closed down the posts. That's all there is to it. If after being given ample warning the Government authorities didn't know

what was required of them, that is their look-out and not ours."

The Canadian Government sent a young naval officer, who in civilian life was employed by the British Museum of Natural History, to investigate the conditions in Baffin Land. This officer and his wife had lived two years with the Eskimos prior to the outbreak of war. The Newfoundland Rangers were also reporting on the conditions of the natives in Labrador.

Everyone in authority to whom I have spoken regarding the welfare of the native population seem agreed on the following points:

(1) The native is happy and contented in his natural surroundings. It would be a mistake to move them into more temperate climates, because they do not flourish when moved away from the North.

(2) The Eskimo is intelligent and a natural mechanic. They will be needed badly when the North Country is finally developed. Eskimos who never had any previous training have been known to strip down a gasoline motor, repair it and put it together again. One explorer stated he had known an Eskimo to take an alarm clock to pieces, repair it and put it together so it kept time.

(3) Now transportation by air is available it ought to be possible to fly in medical aid and supplies when needed. It would also be a good policy to move the tribes from a poor hunting section to a good one by air as conditions dictate.

(4) Laws to prevent the exploitation of the fish, game and fur business by selfish commercial concerns should be passed and rigidly enforced. Only Indians and natives should be permitted to hunt and trap north of latitude 60° north except by special permission granted by the Government. Salmon and trout hatcheries should be estab-

lished in suitable locations. Commercial fishing of the lakes should only be permitted under strict supervision.

(5) One man who traded nearly fifty years with the Eskimos said, "I remember the day when the value the H.B.C. placed on a rifle was the amount of fur it took piled from the floor of the trading post, one piece on top of another, until the pile was as high as the rifle when stood up straight with the butt on the floor. I've seen them charge 75c for chocolate bars and 30c for a 5c-bottle of pop. If you ask them why they charge such prices, they will blandly tell you that they put big prices on luxuries in order to discourage the natives from buying other than essentials. But," as old Mac said, "that argument don't hold water. If they don't want the natives to buy luxuries they shouldn't stock them."

(6) Canada and Newfoundland should immediately introduce or incorporate all the things found to be beneficial to the natives by the experiments carried out by the Russian, Swedish, Norwegian and Lapp Governments during the past fifty years.

(7) Medical science should investigate conditions and see if the natives cannot be given immunity against white man's diseases by inoculation.

(8) Some argue that the Government should take the fur catch of the natives at a fair market price, employing as civil servants reputable men who have lived with the natives and won their confidence. Those who advocate Nationalization of the Fur Industry in the Arctic argue that what the Government lost on the whirligigs it would win on the round-about. In other words, any organization which controlled the whole annual fur harvest couldn't help but make a handsome profit. Therefore there would be no need for the taxpayers in Canada to pay the cost of flying relief to citizens residing in the Frigid Zones. The profits made on the sale of fur, etc. could be used to move

or assist in other ways tribes not so favourably located. There is also an abundance of fish in the lakes. Commercial concerns will be likely to fish them until it no longer is profitable, then move on elsewhere leaving the natives to starve or move also. Private interests had men go up and work for the McNamara Construction Company in order that they could investigate the possibilities of exploiting the fish and game industry of Labrador. The natives only killed the amount of fish and game they required to exist. The traders at first only traded essential goods such as knives, axes, guns, ammunition, fishing gear, etc. These articles improved the natives' living conditions by making it ever so much easier and less dangerous to hunt and kill the meat they required for food.

In the old days the traders charged fabulous amounts for the value of the goods they traded in order that the natives would produce more fur. Then they introduced luxuries so the natives would kill more fur-bearing animals to obtain them. Even the Indian babies smoke as well as the squaws. I have seen an Indian child, which was so young that its head was below its mother's waist, smoking. The squaw was standing and took her cigarette out of her mouth and held it between her fingers. Her hand was dangling at her side when the baby reached up, took the cigarette from between the mother's fingers and proceeded to smoke it.

The natives share everything they possess, share and share alike. They all prosper or they all starve together. I heard they were obliging enough to share their women even with visitors to their villages. Some interviews I had with white men who had lived with the natives for many years threw interesting light on this subject.

No person I met could ever recollect hearing a native discuss sex or tell off colour stories. The sex life to a native is something that is a gratifying pleasure as well

as an absolute necessity. The survival of a tribe depends on the number, the endurance and skill of its hunters, therefore the annual crop of boy babies is a matter of grave concern and vital interest. Girls are not so important except that they produce the boy babies. Their other duties consist of skinning the animals killed by the hunters, tanning the hides of furs, making them into clothes or preparing them for trading purposes.

In the old days when the natives used bone and ivory-tipped arrows and spears with which to kill game ranging in size from the Arctic hare to whales and polar bears, the certainty of securing sufficient food to supply a tribe during the winter was very problematical. If starvation faced a tribe the first to be sacrificed were the girl babies according to age. The youngest were allowed to die or were mercifully strangled first. Then in accordance with age up to puberty. The same thing happened at the top. The oldest women and the most infirm men were allowed to die first, then the other women down to those who were healthy and still able to bear children.

This practice naturally caused the number of men in a tribe to greatly exceed the number of women. If certain members of the tribe had exercised their superior strength or skill to take a woman or women to himself and refuse to share her with other male members of the tribe, then there would have been cause of jealousy. Feuds and strife would have been the result. These would have led to killings. By sharing the favours of the women they all lived like one big happy family.

Therefore if a traveller arrived at a village tired and weary from the trail, he was welcomed, fed, and as a matter of ordinary hospitality he was offered the pleasures of which he had been deprived by reason of his journey or wanderings. During his stay the women would mend

his garments, chew his mukluks until they were soft and pliable again.

The act of strangling children sounds horrible but two men who had been very closely associated with the most northern and primitive Eskimos told me that the children, having no toys as we understand the word, amuse themselves imitating their elders. They build miniature sleds and boats. They make miniature arrows and spears and they get a big thrill strangling each other until they lose consciousness. They use a piece of hide lashing for a noose, and just strangle each other "until they go to sleep". Then the noose is slackened and the playmate is revived. The Eskimo has no fear of death. He either fits into the community or he is killed. There is no place for drones in the Eskimo hive. They are tender and affectionate. They love life and laughter. They have a great sense of humour and they are easily pleased. In conversation they always deprecate their ability or the value of their possessions.

I was amazed on one occasion to hear a native whom Bill Durrell wanted to employ, tell Bill, "You don't want me, Mr. Durrell. I'm a no-good lazy individual—I'd just be in your way—making a nuisance of myself. I wouldn't earn whatever your generosity paid me, I'm just no good at all—I don't like work. You ask my friends."

Bill, knowing this peculiarity, hired the man. He was one of the most faithful and industrious workmen on the job.

CHAPTER 10

Flying the Ice Patrols

"Baldy" Baldwin bags a "Fritz" and attacks three others.

THE purpose of flying the ice patrols was to map the movements of the ice after the spring break-up. Ice Observer Rodda employed by the Department of Transport, Ottawa, arrived at Goose ahead of me. As far as I know he is the first and original flying ice observer. By flying over the Davis Straits, Rodda could plot, and I could see for myself, exactly which way the ice from the northern ice-barrier was drifting on its journey south. We could observe the influence of the winds, the tide, and the currents, and Rodda could plot the "set and drift" of the icebergs and field-ice. To a layman the "set" is the course and distance an object floating on the sea makes in twenty-four hours under the influence of the tides and currents alone. The "drift" is the course and distance it makes under the influence of the wind. The "set and drift" combined give the "mean" course the object travels in twenty-four hours without aid of sails or other mechanical devices.

Rodda's experience of Arctic waters obtained as an employee of the Department of Transport before the war; the knowledge of tides and currents obtained by

Arctic explorers; the data provided by the Meteorological Department from their many weather observation stations, some of them scattered throughout the Arctic, and the co-operation between the U.S.A.A.F., the R.C.A.F., and the Navy, made it possible to forecast with reasonable accuracy what the ice would do for several days ahead.

Rodda would pick out several "bergs" with distinctive features, which made identification easy. He would "fix" their position either by bearings of the land or astrometrical observations. If flying conditions permitted, their positions would be checked again next day. The areas and extent of the dangerous field-ice was plotted, as also were the "leads". The "leads" are the navigable channels of water between ice-fields.

This information enabled the naval authorities, who were responsible for the safe passage of the convoys, to give the ships and their escorts detailed and accurate sailing instructions. It also enabled the S.N.O. to time their departure so as to take full advantage of the weather conditions. For instance, one ice patrol disclosed the fact that a westerly wind had carried all ice from twelve to fifteen miles off the Labrador coast. By passing this information to the Commanding Officer of the senior escort vessel he knew that even if the fog did close down, he could move the convoy ahead cautiously without fear of encountering ice in that particular area, *so long as the wind remained off shore*. So many ships were required to carry the stores, provisions, equipment, and men up north to complete "The Arctic Project" that the saving of even a few days meant a great deal, particularly when the open season for navigation is so short.

I don't think it is too much to claim that about seventeen days were saved in the summer of 1943 due to co-operation of the R.C.A.F. and the U.S.A.A.F. planes located at Goose and Chimo.

Now that the work connected with the defence of the Canadian north-eastern Arctic has been removed from the "secret" list it is permissible to describe what happened. The Canadian Government, working in agreement with the British Government and with the full co-operation of the United States Government, planned the Arctic Project. This is the name given to the whole tremendous aerial development scheme which was considered necessary in the Canadian sub-Arctic and Arctic:

(1) To protect Canada from invasion and aerial blitz from the north-east.

(2) To guarantee a steady flow of planes, both bomber and fighter, from America to the theatres of war in Europe and the Middle East. These planes were required in sufficient numbers to make the Allies positively certain of air superiority.

This was a tall order but it was essential for the successful prosecution of the war. Until Britain and her Allies could assure their military commanders that a *steady* and *regular* flow of planes would land in the various theatres of war in satisfactory numbers, to replace even the most serious and unexpected losses in aircraft, that they might suffer, our military leaders could not plan sufficiently far ahead to make it really worth while.

Rodda and I became impatient to make our first ice patrol. One convoy had been reported leaving Quebec. There had been plenty of U-boat activity during the previous summer and fall. Several ships directly and indirectly connected with the Arctic Project had come to a "sticky" end. There was no reason to suppose that enemy submarines would not attempt to interfere with the ships engaged in the Arctic venture again in 1943. My fears were increased when F.O. Cummings, who at that particular time had charge of R.C.A.F. operations at Goose, informed me that several bombers had reported

sighting submarines on the surface between Labrador and Greenland. Judging from the reports received it looked as if nine enemy submarines might be stretched across the open water just south of the moving ice-fields.

"When can we expect the Canso which is to fly the ice patrols?" Rodda asked "Ops". Then laughing he added, "Or is that an Air Force secret?"

Tom Cummings informed us that "Baldy" was on his way but because of the reports just referred to he was staying out as long as his gas would permit. Tom then told me about "Baldy" and his record. Both Rodda and I were more than delighted to learn that this particular Knight of the Skies was to be our pilot. Tom said something about "Baldy" being as keen on hunting Fritzies as a fox terrier is after rats. Later, when flying with Baldwin, I thought that description fitted him perfectly. He was keen as mustard and untiring when after U-boats as Satan is after the destruction of souls.

Flying Officer D. G. Baldwin, D.F.C., R.C.A.F., was one of the "hot" pilots of the Eastern Air Command. He flew Canso amphibians. They are the good old reliables. Slow but sure, they had plenty of endurance to carry out long patrols over the ocean when searching for U-boats. To his messmates he was known only as "Baldy". He is an American and his home town is New Orleans. When I flew with him he had reached the mature age of twenty-one. He had won popularity because of three determined attacks on enemy submarines sighted off the east coast. Finally he had distinguished himself, and won fame, by a fourth attack which was officially credited as a kill. "Baldy" was decorated with the Distinguished Flying Cross.

"Baldy" wasn't bald. He was the picture of youthful elegance and manly beauty. He was so damned good-looking that the other officers used to groan if he an-

nounced he would be present and competing for the favours of the few nurses who attended the weekly "Rat Race" held every Saturday night in the R.C.A.F. Officers' Mess. At the time of which I write there were six R.C.A.F. nursing sisters and one female dietitian stationed at Goose Bay. The officers attending the weekly "Rat Race" usually outnumbered the women ten or even fifteen to one.

The attack for which "Baldy" received his decoration was a "whiz". At least, that is the way a member of his crew described it. The "Fritz" had been sighted when surfaced several thousand yards away. "Baldy" jumped back up into the clouds from which he had just emerged, praying that the enemy submarine had neither seen nor heard him. He broke out under the clouds again when he figured he was in the right position. His calculations were correct. Below him he saw the "Fritz" fully surfaced, with some of her crew in the conning-tower.

"Baldy's" crew were already at action stations. The other three U-boats "Baldy" had attacked dived the moment they became aware of the presence of a hostile plane . . . but not this one. Instead of diving, enemy seamen closed up at their gun positions. It was quite evident they were determined to fight.

This did not deter the youngster from New Orleans. He put the nose of his plane down and went into a terrific power dive. Nearer and nearer they came. "Baldy" saw the enemy tracer bullets come streaking towards his plane. Next he heard the sound of his own .50 machine guns rattling away in their deadly chatter. Then "Baldy's" heart gave a sudden bump. He saw the bullets from the Canso's guns mow into the enemy's gun-crew. Four members of the Jerry's crew seemed to be suddenly jerked from their fighting positions as if by unseen hands. For an instant they appeared to look amazedly around as if seeking the cause of their misfortune, then they slumped dejectedly

and fell overboard. All this happened more quickly than it takes to relate. "Baldy's" bomb-sights were coming on. Another split second and the depth-charges were away. The pictures taken by one of the crew were amazing. One photo distinctly showed the four enemy seamen toppling overboard, another shows the depth-charges "Baldy" let go making a perfect straddle of the target. The next picture shows the mounds of water rising to cover the decks of the Nazi pirate, and the last picture shows the submarine going down stern first. Those very excellent pictures were conclusive evidence that at least one more Nazi submarine would never return to base.

Rodda and I had talked things over. Once Baldwin arrived we could make an ice survey while flying from Cape Harrison to the Straits of Belle Isle and then cover the convoy against attack by U-boats while they ploughed their way north, until our fuel gave out. If other planes were available they could take over where we left off.

Catalina and Canso planes were used to a great extent in 1940-43 for flying the anti-submarine patrols off the east coast. Because of the extraordinary keenness of the youthful flying officers they did better than might have reasonably been expected. While at Goose and Gander I met pilots who had flown the Atlantic patrols in Cansos. I met some who had been grounded by the medical officers because they had put in such long hours flying. The M.O.s grounded them to keep them from cracking up completely. After all, there is a limit to human endurance, but some of the pilots to whom I refer just wouldn't stay on the ground. When there was even a remote chance of meeting up with a "Fritz" they remained in the air. I was informed that one officer I got to know well, had put in over 3,000 hours in less than two years. Many of the pilots had refused leave when the conditions were favourable for getting a "Fritz".

"Baldy" didn't show up until after 2200. After reporting in to "Ops" he came over to the Mess. His reception was wildly enthusiastic. It was quite evident that "Baldy" was very popular. The majority of the officers off duty that night had been long and studiously pouring drinks down the neck of a young fighter pilot known as "The Squirrel". "The finest damn kid that ever put up his wings!" That was Russ Taylor's estimation of his brother fighter pilot. He has just received his posting for overseas and his messmates had organized the farewell party.

"Baldy" dodged a deluge of drinks offered to him with, "Sorry, you chaps, but I'm pushing off in a couple of hours."

I could hardly believe my ears. I knew he had been at least fourteen hours in the air since leaving Torbay.

One of the officers brought "Baldy" over and introduced him to me. After the usual formalities "Baldy" lowered his voice and said earnestly, "My co-pilot and crew are going to catch a couple of hours shut-eye while the plane is being serviced. We'll be pushing off at 0200 sharp. It is my plan to arrive at Harrison as soon as it is daylight. Then fly south, pick up the convoy and stick to it until we get it into Hamilton Inlet or run out of fuel. We think there's a "Fritz" out there and if there is my crew are the boys to put salt on his tail. Tom Cummings told me you are coming along, Commander. Glad to have you. . . . I just *know* you'll bring us luck."

To me "Baldy" looked as fresh as a daisy on a summer's morn. His hair was clipped exceptionally short. It stood up perfectly straight and made him look aggressive. There was no false modesty about Baldwin. He knew he was good and he was proud of the fact. He just bubbled enthusiasm and sparkled optimism like a glass of champagne. He had a pleasant, soft tone in his voice that is so characteristic of the Southern States. He was weather-

beaten to a healthy tan. Only his eyes showed the slightest signs of fatigue and lengthy service. A smile was always in his eyes and when his lips parted to give it expression, or to permit a whole-hearted spontaneous fit of laughter, they disclosed the finest set of teeth I ever hope to see. His laugh and high spirits were as infectious as the 'flu.

"Come and have a bite, Commander. I'm hungry as a bear." "Baldy" led the way into the dining-room. We ate cucumber and cheese sandwiches. Then he spotted some beets, stuffed eggs, and cold meat. While demolishing this food he confided to me:

"Last time I visited this ruddy Mess I swiped half the contents out of the "Frig" before leaving on patrol. I believe in eating good meals when out on long patrols. A good juicy steak is better than any ham sandwich to my way of thinking. We've got a dandy outfit for cooking aboard my crate . . . How about you scrounging some grub—something worth while? To hell with their sandwiches—that's what I say."

"Baldy's" mannerism reminded me of the days during the last war when I was serving in British submarines. As a matter of fact, just coming in personal contact with these young enthusiastic airmen made me feel twenty-five years younger. I found it impossible to realize that my eldest daughter had presented me with my first grandchild before I flew into Goose Bay.

"You get some sleep. . . . I'll scrounge the food," I informed him.

"Atta boy, Commander! I knew the navy would never let us down."

I wandered into the huge kitchen and walked over to the night cook. He had been to sea in his early days and we were on the best of terms. Everybody lived a very free-and-easy life when off duty at the airport.

"What have you got in the ice-box that's good, Chef?" I asked him.

"How many days' food do you need, Commander?"

"Only one. That pirate 'Baldy' and his crew are taking me out on patrol tomorrow. We're pushing off in a couple of hours. . . . 'Baldy' suggested steaks smothered with onions and all the fixings," I informed him, fully expecting he would blow a fuse.

"I've some of the finest steaks you've ever eaten. As for that 'Baldy', I hope they choke 'im! But seein' you're going along with him. . . . I'll fix you all up. How many will there be?"

"Mr. Rodda, myself, and 'Baldy's' crew," I informed the cook.

"I'll have everything ready in an hour," the old chap informed me cheerfully.

Two o'clock in the morning we stood huddled on the parking strip near the Canso.

"Ever fly in a Canso, Commander?" Moody, the co-pilot, asked me.

"Yes. Robinson and Hale flew me while I was at Shelburne," I informed him.

"Well then, that's O.K. All the comforts of home—good view—well ventilated—housekeeping privileges and cooking facilities . . . What more could a man want?" Moody rattled on like a real estate agent.

"How did you make out with the cook?" "Baldy" enquired.

"He gave me steaks and said he hoped yours would choke you," I informed him. "Baldy" roared until the night echoed with his laughter. He'd stolen the last of the cook's eggs just before he departed after his last visit.

Cansos are amphibian. They can land on land or sea. They can remain in the air for twenty hours or more at cruising speed, but they are slow compared with really

modern aircraft. They are considered as the steady old reliables and very rarely give trouble until they run out of gas.

It was cold at 2 o'clock that June morning as we scrambled into the blister of the plane and piled parachutes, Mae Wests and flying clothes into a corner of the 'midship section.

Rodda was a thin little fellow with dark brown eyes and a very black beard. He had spent many years voyaging into the Canadian Arctic. I learned to like and admire Rodda immensely while working with him up north. He was suffering with a "bad" stomach. I don't know exactly what was wrong, but flying made him terribly sick. The strange thing was that he was apparently all right when actually in the air, but he vomited his insides out every time he landed. He was most conscientious. He never passed up an opportunity to fly an ice patrol when the weather was suitable. He refrained from going near the Medical Officer until after his task was completed. When I urged him to see the M.O. he replied, "It's only for a few weeks. I'll get fixed up when I return to Ottawa."

"Baldy", as Captain of his ship, was a very different individual from "Baldy" in the Mess. He gave his orders well. They were terse, brief, and definite. But there was always an atmosphere of friendliness and mutual confidence between "Baldy" and his crew that reminded me of my own service in British submarines during the last war.

"Everyone well for'ard when we take off," "Baldy" announced. "While flying to the coast I want half the crew to get all the rest they can. When we reach Cape Harrison the Commander and Mr. Rodda will take the first watch in the blister. I'll take first turn at the controls."

The Canso when taking the air reminded me of a fat wild goose which had spent a profitable night in a grain field. She was carrying quite a load and wobbled and swayed as she made her run and rose to become airborne. But she finally cleared the trees at the end of the runway and headed towards the first rosy tints of the dawn.

Strange as it may seem, Moody was Baldwin's instructor when he first joined the R.C.A.F. in 1940. They were a great pair and the very best of friends. I hadn't gotten properly into my flying clothes before Moody had grabbed some loose gear for a pillow and was stretched out fast asleep. It is said a man can get used to anything, but I was amazed to see Moody asleep in about three minutes flat. To my ears the noise inside the plane was terrible.

I couldn't find the felt flying boot for my left foot. Never realizing that the temperature would get so cold in June, I went out into the "blister" with Rodda to keep look-out and to watch the rising of the sun. My left foot nearly froze. I had an idea my boot was under Moody's head but he looked so relaxed and content as he slumbered that I didn't have the heart to disturb him. When Moody was called we had coffee, toast and marmalade—and I put on the other flying boot.

I never hope to see anything more beautiful than the cloud effects and the sunrise I saw that morning. We had gone up to eight thousand feet in order to clear the mountain-tops and to be above the clouds. It was an extraordinary experience to see the dawn from above them. As the light increased I could see the clouds beneath us quite clearly. At first they just looked like a dirty layer of bed-ticking spread unevenly from horizon to horizon. As the light grew stronger we flew over clouds of strange formations. At one time we passed over some

which were wild and woolly in appearance and in fantastic shapes, some shooting up towards us looked like church spires. As the sun rose and the light grew stronger, the clouds were transformed into a regular fairy land.

We didn't come down beneath the clouds until we reached the coast, and were well out over the sea. "Baldy" had again taken the controls and I was up forward in the co-pilot's seat. I saw him put her nose down and we dived gently from bright sunshine into the damp obscurity of the clouds. I watched the altimeter as we descended. We saw nothing at one thousand feet. "Baldy" altered course and flew south-east for half an hour; then he went down to 500 feet. I was wondering if Arctic icebergs rose 500 feet above the sea.

Down we went to 250 feet. "Baldy" spoke to me. "It's thick here . . . I'm going up again. We'll head for the convoy. No sense coming down below 250 feet here if we can't see the ice." I nodded agreement.

The next hour or so I slept. I slept on the cat-walk, using anything softer than wood for a pillow. The noise of the engines seemed to actually act as a lullaby by this time.

I went for'ard again when I awoke.

"We'll be over the convoy any minute," "Baldy" told me.

Once again I saw him go down slowly through the clouds. I admit frankly, I felt nervous in a plane for the first time. It seemed so strange gliding down seeing nothing but grey mist which swirled and eddied around the plane as it was churned up by the whirling propellers.

"Baldy" was looking intently into the opacity ahead. We were down to 200 feet. I was silently wishing "Baldy" would take her up again. The thoughts of icebergs and mast-heads wasn't very comforting when one was flying so low.

Then I looked down and thought I saw movement . . . It *was* movement. I could see the wave-tops breaking. The white was just a little different from the grey of the water and the clouds. Within a few minutes flying at 200 feet I saw "Baldy" point, and looking, saw a ship beneath us. The sun was growing stronger and the mist was clearing from the water. About an hour later the clouds lifted and the fog rolled away to disclose a marvellous sight. *I could see nine ships, and in no case were there two ships without an iceberg between them.* It was utterly impossible for the convoy to keep any kind of formation, the ships were just picking their way cautiously between the floating mountains of ice.

"Baldy" went down to mast-head height and we flew from one ship to another, passing so close to the wings of their bridges that we could recognize some of the officers I knew. We waved to them. The sun was strong and bright and by 1,100 feet the light was striking on the hard surfaces of the icebergs, causing them to sparkle like jewels in an emerald setting. It was the most superb seascape I had ever seen.

The bergs were all sizes—all shapes—and various heights. Some were flat as the top of a table, others were so perfect in symmetry that they looked as if they had been cut out of the Greenland ice-cap with ice-saws in the hands of giants. Some bergs towered hundreds of feet into the air, and I saw lakes nesting between the pinnacles at the top of some of the larger ones. The blues and the whites and the emerald green of the sky, the ice, and the sea, blended into a scene which seemed too perfect for this world of ours. The hulls of the little man-made ships, ploughing their way through the waves between the majestic bergs, looked strangely out of place.

We flew all around the convoy, covering it ahead and astern, and we swept both beams. It seemed mar-

vellous to cover so much area with so little effort. We took one quick run down to the Straits of Belle Isle. We counted over two hundred bergs off the entrance. Others were stranded near Cape Charles. We took a sweep north as far as Hopedale, and Rodda plotted carefully those icebergs with individual shapes that were easy to identify.

At noon we ate a good dinner. The old Chef had treated us handsomely. He had provided plenty of partly cooked potatoes which we fried. There were fried onions all ready to heat over again. The steaks were thick and juicy as he had promised. He had also provided a couple of pies and some old cheese. I couldn't help thinking what a difference it was flying in that Canso, covering roughly 2,500 miles in one day and eating like princes, to what it had been travelling by train from Shelburne to Halifax on the "Blue Berry Special". The "Blue Berry Special" takes seven hours to do 125 miles. If you are hungry you may swallow a bowl of fish chowder at a station restaurant where the train stops for a few minutes. Up in that Canso I enjoyed every minute of the fourteen hours we stayed aloft.

On a subsequent occasion I heard a different version of the story of how "Baldy" bagged his "Fritz". An officer attached to Operations at the base from which he was flying that particular day described the adventure as follows:

"When we received the W/T message from "Baldy" saying 'Attacking U-boat position—North—, —West', the air in the Control Room seemed charged with electricity.

"Various comments could be heard from those who happened to be present. 'Lucky Blighter . . . That makes number four for 'Baldy'. Did you ever see such luck?' I knew, however, that the weather was closing down and

that every minute "Baldy" stayed out reduced his chances of making a safe landing.

"The Group Captain, upon being informed, came over to Operations. The only time there has been any excitement was when a U-boat was actually sighted and presented an opportunity for an attack. That afternoon in the Control Room everyone seemed to go nuts. They bent over the chart as if trying to see what actually was happening out there in the Atlantic. Inwardly, they were all pulling and praying for 'Baldy's' success. They were like fans at a baseball game cheering on their own team.

"One of the Senior Officers went into the 'Met' office. He studied the most recent reports and forecasts. The weather promised to be anything but favourable for 'Baldy' and his crew on their return journey. 'Baldy' was six hundred miles away making his attack at the tail end of a long patrol. He couldn't possibly have gas for more than six hours flying. It would take him all his time to make it against strong head winds, even if he was able to land at the nearest base. If the weather shut down along the coast, and he had to be diverted to another base, it was questionable if he would have endurance enough to keep him in the air. Those of us sitting around couldn't help but recall similar weather conditions when it had been necessary to divert planes to Maine and even to Montreal.

"The Group Captain sat thinking deeply. He kept tapping his fingers impatiently on the top of his desk. One might as well try to call an Airedale off a cat as call 'Baldy' away from that Fritz . . . There was nothing anyone could do except wait. Waiting for something to happen is the very worst experience of war—the longer the suspense the worse the experience.

"A sergeant rushed in from the wireless office waving a signal. He suddenly composed himself and handed the

piece of paper to me. I told the C.O. it was from 'Baldy'. It read 'Good attack, believe kill'. Four words described the life-and-death drama which had just taken place on the watery wastes of the North Atlantic ocean.

"From a battle with the U-boat it developed into a race, against the weather, with death. The weather closed down hour by hour. Slowly, surely, cruel and inconsiderate. Finally there was only one airport open that 'Baldy' might reach before his fuel ran out. One hundred and fifty or sixty miles an hour seems fast movement to most people who are unaccustomed to flying in modern planes, but it was terribly slow for those who were waiting and watching in the Operations office that evening.

"I know that some of us waiting anxiously actually prayed that 'Baldy' and his crew might arrive safely. It was just hell sitting there unable to help in any other way! We kept reading the latest weather reports that showed us he was slowly but surely being shut out of one after another of the nearer airports. We could picture him sitting at the controls, grim and determined, coaxing every last mile out of 'Old Reliable' as she bucked the headwinds, which increased in velocity, and raced against the fog which was closing down thicker than an old-fashioned feather mattress."

The "Ops" officer told me he found himself repeating mentally over and over again. "Baldy" will be back . . . Every time he has an attack, he *always* gets back . . . The kid is queer that way . . . There's going to be a celebration in some R.C.A.F. Mess tonight . . . What a celebration! . . . 'Baldy' will be back again all right."

"Baldy" *did* get back. He brought "Old Reliable" and his crew in with about two gallons of gas to spare. He walked into the office for interrogation. He perched himself on the edge of the desk, lit a cigarette, and swung

his high leg back and forth. His crew entered after him and gathered around.

"Well? Let's have it. Shoot!" the Group Captain said.

"I came out of a cloud at about 1,500 feet. I saw the sub. Two of my crew spotted it simultaneously. I popped back up into the cloud and kept out of sight while heading towards it. I prayed to God *that* Fritz hadn't seen or heard us. The other three I've attacked did a crash dive the moment they saw us . . . but it was different with this baby. When I came out of the cloud again we were in ideal position. But instead of doing a 'crash dive' I saw the U-boat's gun-crew close up at their action stations.

"O.K., Mister, says I, here goes . . . I went down at him with throttle wide open. Our guns began blazing away. They did some fine shooting. I could see the bullets striking the deck, others splashed into the water right alongside. The Hun crew trained their gun and started to fire. I don't know where they aimed. The next thing I noticed was as if an unseen hand had reached out and swept four of the Germans into the sea. It was a weird sight. It looked as if they were suddenly jerked upright and turned half around and then they toppled over and slid into the drink . . . It was time for me to let go the depth-charges." Thus "Baldy" ended his story.

"I'll swear those depth-charges fell on either side of the U-boat," "Baldy's" engineer stated. "We banked just as they were let go and I saw them make a perfect landing. I'll bet the photos prove my statement."

The photographs did. "Baldy" was decorated.

A newspaper man once asked "Baldy" why he had joined the R.C.A.F. so early in the war. "Did you see the light?" he asked the young American.

"Light? Hell no. Woman trouble . . . This looked like the real solution . . . Turned out all right too."

CHAPTER 11

The Geese Fly to Gander

A chapter in which several stories are told—The U.S.A.A.F. bomb an enemy base which was discovered located in northern Greenland—Andy Devine and Mary Elliott visit Goose with the U.S.O. shows—I fly from Goose to Ottawa via Gander and return the same way—The U.S.A.A.F. fly me out to locate a convoy which had been stuck five days in heavy fog.

REPORTS both false and true always provide a little excitement and invariably cause extra work because they must be checked and investigated. From what I heard while north there can be no question but that the enemy actually flew planes over Labrador and other Arctic territory on reconnaissance flights. The reason so many officers of the Eastern Air Command flew more hours than they should have, was because of intense enemy U-boat activity along the Atlantic coast in 1941-42 and in the entrance of the St. Lawrence in the summer of 1942.

The usual crop of enemy report stories originate no matter where you are in wartime. U-boats were reported in Davis Strait between Labrador and Greenland; U-boats were reported in Lake Melville; U-boats were reported in

the inlet leading to Port Burwell; U-boats were reported in the Straits of Belle Isle and elsewhere. Officially, U-boat activity up north was exceptionally light during the summer of 1943.

One U-boat was sighted and attacked by a U.S. task force escorting an American convoy when they were about 187 miles east of Cape Blank. Other U-boats were sighted by bombers while flying between Goose Bay and Greenland.

Where they were going or what they intended to do is problematical. They may have been sent out with the intention of intercepting and attacking the large American convoy going North, but if that was their mission it failed miserably. Perhaps they found more icebergs in those latitudes than was to their liking.

Natives reported hearing the engines of a submarine near Port Burwell. Investigation seemed to bear out that this man knew what he was talking about. It is just possible that the U-boat reported off Port Burwell may have been waiting to sink the S.S. *Nascopie* which makes a regular voyage into the Arctic every summer. The S.S. *Nascopie* happened to develop boiler trouble just as she was due to leave Quebec, and was unable to sail with the convoy. She sailed independently some time afterwards and this upset her whole schedule. This delay may have upset the U-boat's calculations, but it also made it impossible for the *Nascopie* to land stores and provisions on Ross Island, one of the Hudson's Bay Company's most northerly trading posts.

It so happened that the *Nascopie* had failed to land supplies at Fort Ross the previous year also, owing to the ice conditions and the lateness of the season. Thus this little garrison had been cut off from civilization for two full years. Mr. W. A. Hyslop was the factor at Fort Ross. He had married Miss Babs Irwin of Winnipeg in 1940.

She had lived with him at Fort Ross following their marriage. Mr. D. W. Munro was the factor's clerk. I believe the R.C.M.P. operated a patrol from Fort Ross also. In order that the few white people would not have to remain another whole year before being relieved, it was decided to fly them out.

I never did favour sensationalism in journalism. Truth is so often stranger than any fiction. The newspaper stories I have read about the "Rescue Flights" to "save the factor and his wife from starvation" are, to say the least, rather exaggerated. First of all, it is not an uncommon occurrence for whites to spend much longer than three full years in the Arctic. Secondly, it was a comparatively simple matter to drop them all the stores and provisions they might require by air. The first plane dropped over a ton of provisions. It would appear a good deal more likely that the Hudson's Bay Company had decided to shut down Fort Ross as a trading post as they had shut down eight others. Whatever is the truth of the matter, the circumstances in no way deteriorate from the very fine story of how the U.S.A.A.F. carried out the "rescue".

Jack Hone, who flew Eric Fry up to Chimo and afterwards to Baffin Land, had been keeping an eye on the *Nascopie* and reported her failure to reach Fort Ross. The rescue of the white population was directed from Edmonton. Before it was decided to evacuate them, the first plane flew in one ton of supplies and landed them safely by parachute. When it was decided to go in after the Hudson's Bay factor, his wife and the clerk, the U.S. bomber flew in Captain J. F. Stanwell-Fletcher of Dimock, Pa. He is a former member of the R.C.M.P., with plenty of experience in the Arctic, and he volunteered to jump by parachute and establish a landing place, and direct the plane when landing. This experiment amply illustrates

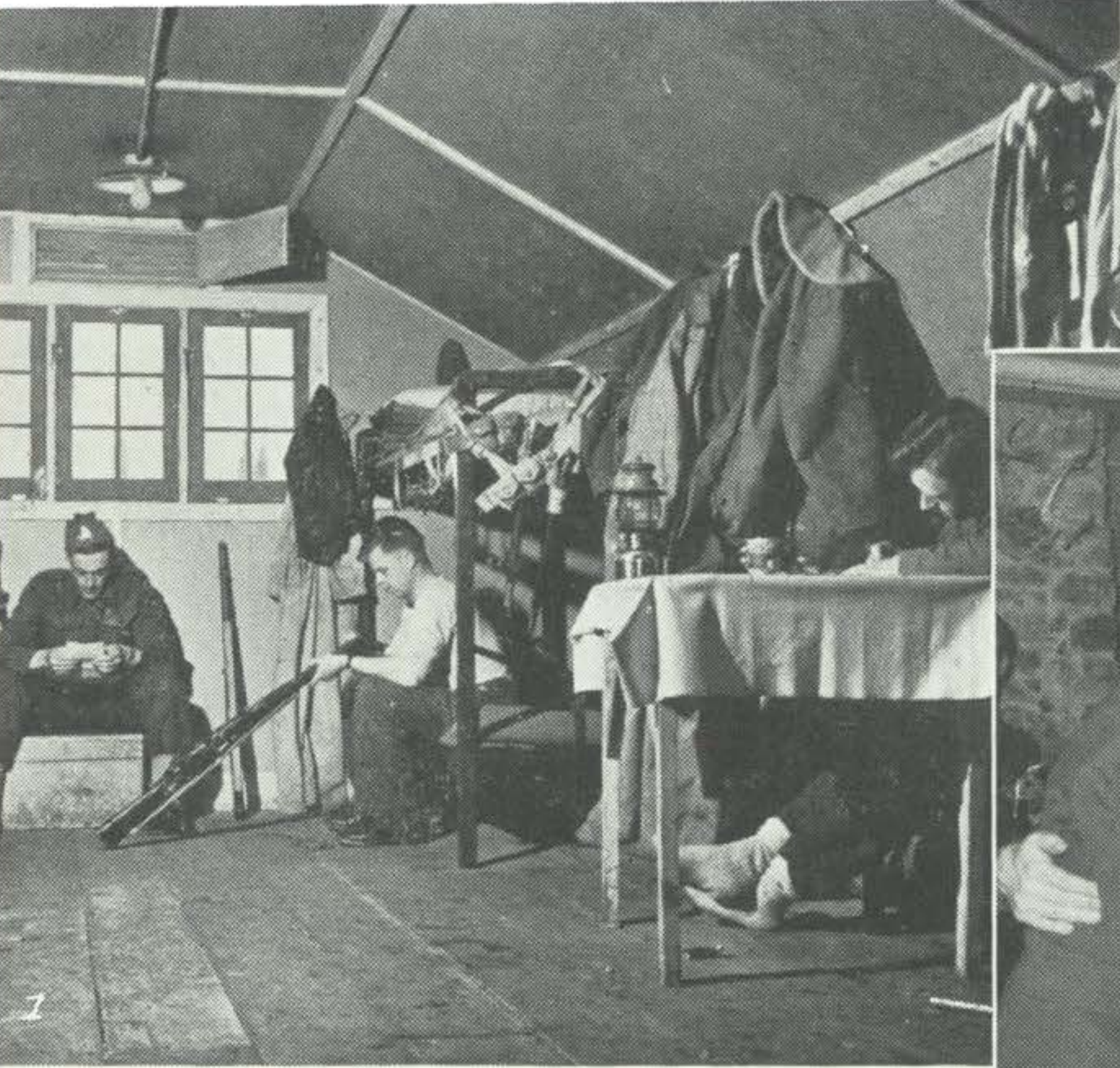
the feasibility of landing large bombers in the Arctic even when it has been impossible to construct proper runways. The ex-mounty dropped to earth, or rather to the ice, and directed the work of preparing a temporary runway on a near-by lake. When all was ready the bomber returned and made a perfect landing.

The crew who flew the bomber in to Fort Ross were Captain W. H. Corwin of Long Branch, Calif. David D. Duff, otherwise known as D.D.D., of Irwin, Tenn., was co-pilot. Mrs. Hyslop and the others climbed into the bomber and waved good-bye to the Eskimos who had gathered around to see at close quarters the "big birds" that flew in ever-increasing numbers over their ice-bound hunting-grounds. I cannot help but like these simple people of the northlands. They are so child-like and honest. I am pleased to see that the Dominion Government have decided to take a greater interest in their welfare. They have had to struggle for their existence for centuries. They have a brave independent spirit . . . but . . . the white man has invaded their homelands . . . he has introduced into their tribes diseases they had never known before. The least we can do for them is what Russia has done for the citizens of her Arctic territories. Surely, with the knowledge now available to modern science, they can be saved from extermination? Perhaps they can be inoculated against 'flu, and measles, and meningitis and T.B. etc. To follow a policy of "sit still and do nothing" seems colder and more merciless than the climate in which they live.

During the mid-summer season of 1943, U-boat activity dropped off everywhere. We wondered just what the reason might be. Late in the summer more frequent reports came in. A squadron of Cansos were sent up to Goose to operate from this base. "Baldy" returned with them. They were like an excited bunch of school boys in



(Top) A Liberator being serviced; (centre) Taking off for the Weather Patrol; (bottom) Clearing surplus snow off runways.



(Top) One of the new Army huts; (centre) At the Saturday night "Rat Race"; (bottom) Group of officers enjoy a game of poker.

the Mess. They were kidding and joshing each other unmercifully. One evening Moody went around with a knife and cut off the end of everyone's tie. He claimed he wanted them for "joss" souvenirs. How he hoped to identify the owners to whom the ties had once belonged is beyond me. I lost the end of my newest tie to Moody. I lost the executive curl off one of my uniform jackets to Mary Elliott, I lost my watch and cuff-links to a thief, but I gained a wealth of experience and I hope a number of friends.

One day an Air Vice-Marshal visited Goose while on a tour of inspection. When he was ready to leave he decided to fly from Goose to Gander in one of the Cansos. En route they saw a "Fritz" sitting on the surface of the sea like a lame duck. They couldn't see a soul on deck and it looked as if they had caught the U-boat napping. They dived in for the attack but when they were about 1,200 feet from the submarine they were met with such a barrage of anti-aircraft fire that they only missed being shot down by a miracle. A vegetable strainer is whole metal compared with the hull of that Canso when it finally reached base.

"That U-boat didn't have a man on deck but she threw everything up at us except the keel," was the way the pilot told of his experience afterwards. "It just goes to show you how the devil looks after his own! Damn good job I had the A.V.M. along with me that trip," he concluded humorously.

Additional evidence that the Nazis intended to use the Iceland-Greenland-Labrador route for the invasion of America was supplied when a Danish patrol, knowing the north-eastern coast of Greenland, volunteered to proceed by sled and, if possible, locate a suspected enemy base. Mr. Frank Knox, U.S. Naval Secretary, gave out a state-

ment after the base had been bombed out of existence by U.S. bombers.

The Danes, accompanied by picked American troops, set off on their perilous journey. It took them far north into the almost uninhabited regions of north-eastern Greenland. They discovered the German base but Nazi patrols discovered them. There was a brief encounter during which one Dane, Eli Knudsen, was killed. Two others were captured. Other members of the patrol escaped and made their way back and reported what had happened.

During the time the remainder of the patrol were making their way back, the Nazi holding force decided to raid a Danish weather reporting station located far up in the Arctic. The station was only defended by a few Danes armed with hunting rifles. Resistance was useless and most of the Danes, who were experienced in Arctic travel, made their escape.

U.S. bombers next took a hand and acting on the information brought back by the survivors of the original patrol, they bombed the base and sank a small supply ship.

When ice conditions permitted two American coast-guard cutters, under command of Captain Carl C. Von Paulsen, of Cambridge, Mass., went north with Army troops. They landed at the German base but found it deserted. It had been pretty well liquidated by the American bombers. It appeared evident that the base had been set up as a permanent station. The buildings included a radio station, a power-house, an emergency generator, a transmitter, machine-gun emplacements, and well-stocked store-houses. When the American troops landed, they found the Nazis had left, apparently by air. The only building intact was the generating station.

While the U.S. coast-guard vessels were up north they were attacked by enemy aircraft on three different

occasions. Twice the vessels were able to engage the enemy planes. It is believed that one enemy plane was seriously damaged by the ack-ack guns aboard the U.S. patrol vessels.

The high-light of the story is the fact that the commanding officer of the Nazi garrison forced one of the captured Danes to guide him on an expedition to explore a section of the coast north of where the weather reporting station was located. In due course they set out and the Dane proved himself a very useful companion. He completely hoodwinked the Nazi commander and gained his confidence. One day he took advantage of this. When the Nazi was off guard he attacked and overpowered him. It took the Danish hunter thirty-eight days travelling on foot, dragging a sled with the necessary provisions, but he finally delivered the Nazi officer to the U.S. Army.

* * * * *

Strange things happen during wartime. Imagine the surprise of an English naval officer when he landed at the base in the Far North and was introduced to Andy Devine and Miss Mary Elliott. He said, "Hum . . . Ha . . . No kidding! Really?" There was no kidding. It was Andy and Mary in the flesh. They had flown in as part of one of the U.S.O. shows "just to give the boys a little entertainment". Andy was never more entertaining in his life. Mary was a charming little Miss and won the hearts of all the boys she met. They christened her "Queen of the North" that night in the Mess.

When Andy and Mary first came on the stage Andy looked in my direction. The sunlight was streaming in through a window. He said, "Would the officer with the bald head sitting in the front row kindly move over. The sunlight reflecting off his head hurts my eyes." This

sally gave the boys a good laugh. Flying Officer Christie was one of those who laughed loudest.

Andy said to Mary, "What did you do after you landed from the plane?"

"I didn't get a chance to do anything—he did it all."

"He did it all . . . What do you mean? Explain yourself," demanded Andy excitedly.

"Well, while you were talking your head off to the Colonel I was just standing there. Suddenly I saw an officer come running towards me. He shouted, 'Get ready, honey, I'm coming in on the beam.'"

"And he did?"

"You bet he did . . . before I knew what had happened he had me in his arms."

"What?" screeched Andy in his false-cracked voice.

"Oh, don't get excited, Andy . . . I kind of liked it."

"Now Mary, you know what you promised your mother before you left home?"

"Sure I remember, Andy. What about it?"

"Have you made any dates yet?"

"Sure! I dated the officer I told you about. I've got a date for tonight."

"Who is this officer?"

"It is Flying Officer Christie and he has the D.F.C." This time it was Christie's turn to feel embarrassed because he hadn't so much as met Miss Elliot up to this time. The R.C.A.F. personnel certainly gave him the razzberry.

"Remember, Mary," Andy told her seriously, "you promised your mother faithfully before you left that you wouldn't permit any men to visit your apartment while you were away. Don't do anything that would cause her to worry."

"I promise you I won't, Andy. As a matter of fact he's not going to visit me in my quarters—I'm going over to his. It's his mother who'll have to worry."

The thousand-odd personnel just about howled the roof off at the end of this sally. Poor Christie was getting the life kidded out of him.

Both Andy and Mary were entertained in the Officers' Mess that night. The Y.M.C.A. officials showed a Wild West picture in which Andy played a leading part. He in turn was kidded most unmercifully. During the fight between Andy and the rustlers they yelled, "Reload your gun, Andy . . . You've fired ten shots already!" When he rode his horse at break-neck speed to save somebody or other they yelled, "Who subbed for you in that ride, Andy? No horse could ever carry your weight that far and that fast!" (Andy weighs well over 250 pounds.)

I noticed it didn't take long for Christie to get over his shyness. He danced most of the evening with Mary.

Mary made herself so popular that "the weather closed in" and she was delayed three whole days at Goose, much to the delight of all the young officers.

She was a charming girl. She didn't smoke and she didn't drink, but she was as full of fun and mischief as an egg is full of meat. The U.S.O. shows are more than appreciated by the boys who are fighting this war in the more outlandish places of the globe.

* * * * *

One morning, early, I received a signal, ordering me to report at N.S.H.Q., Ottawa, for a conference with Captain S. Brand, O.B.E., R.C.N. There happened to be a plane leaving for Gander in fifteen minutes' time. Aboard that plane were F.O. Alexander, ex-R.C.M.P. officer who was in charge of security at Goose Bay and Nursing Sister Ethel——. The pilot of the transport plane was Tommy Mahon, to whom I referred in a previous

chapter. He was the pilot in charge of the plane from which the four men jumped when they thought it had caught fire.

The ride to Gander from Goose was bumpy. When we were over the area where Sergeant Hogan jumped we hit a couple of air pockets which caused the plane to do a few rather severe gyrations. The cargo shifted alarmingly but not so as to be dangerous. Ethel behaved very well, joking with the rest of us, when suddenly the side door of the transport flew open.

It is far more comfortable flying with it shut, so Alexander placed his arms securely around my waist while I reached out and tried to pull the door closed. When the door flew open the red lights switched on, warning the pilot that the paratroops were about to jump. His consternation can readily be imagined. He thought his experience of the earlier trip was being repeated. He sent his co-pilot aft to investigate. We finally secured the door and had a good laugh over the matter afterwards.

Upon arrival at Gander it looked as if we would be grounded for the night, but a change of front removed the necessity and we took off again about 2100. It was about the worst ride I ever took in a plane, but it was the one I enjoyed best. Alexander, Ethel, and I were in the plane with three R.C.A.F. officers who were going on leave. The worse the weather grew, the higher the plane was forced to fly, and the colder it got the better the party spirit developed. We sang all the Air Force songs, including the "North Atlantic Squadron", "Away up in Goose Bay where the huskies are thick", "Said the little red hen to the big grey rooster", "I've got sixpence", and many others.

Once we flew so high to escape the worst of a storm that it became really cold. The plane was loaded from deck to deck-head, or from floor to ceiling, whichever

may be correct, but we managed to arrange a space in which to place a sleeping-bag for Ethel's comfort. Considerately we switched out the lights so she might have a sleep in warmth and comfort. But poor Ethel could never get into the bag alone. Nearly every attempt she found herself with two companions. Bucking head-winds the journey took seven and one-half hours from Gander to Dorval, but I never in all my life laughed so much in so short a time.

Ethel had been drafted for overseas duty in Italy, and she was proceeding on embarkation leave. As we neared Montreal she gasped out, "If I survive this trip I'll never fear another! Nothing I may be asked to endure on active service could possibly equal the experience of this trip!"

When we reached Dorval I learned my plane left very early for Ottawa so the others decided it wasn't worth while going to bed. We went to the Mount Royal, had a wash and a shave and then the whole gang went out in search of breakfast. The hilarity which had sustained us in the plane broke out afresh in the restaurant. Before I left to catch my plane the harassed proprietor was wondering if he hadn't better call the Fire Department to drench the party spirit.

During my return trip to Goose we again flew into bad weather. I was anxious to get back in order to sail the ships which had discharged during my absence, in time to meet the incoming convoy's escort at Rigolet. It was the intention to use the same corvettes to escort the empty vessels back to Montreal. This time we were grounded four days at Gander. The fact that I was flying in order to arrive ahead of the convoy became a great joke with the Gander officials. *We were grounded because Goose Bay Airport was closed down.* This happened so rarely that it gave the Gander people a wonderful oppor-

tunity to razz the very dickens out of those of us who were based at Goose.

"Better hire a row-boat, Commander. You'll likely make better time than waiting for Goose to open up again . . . Guess she's all through for the duration."

After several false alarms we finally took to the air about 1600 of the third day. Three R.A.F. W.D.s piled into the plane at the last minute. One was a Wing Commander. They were all going to Goose on a tour of inspection. Two of the W.D.s were thin, the other was fair, fat, and nearing forty. We were carrying a cargo of vegetables on the return trip and I wondered how these Women's Division Officers were going to stand the stink of half-rotted vegetables. It was two hours' flying from Goose to Gander and with the weather as it was at that time anything was likely to happen.

We were hardly properly started on our way when we received a signal from Gander saying that a heavy flow of gas had been noticed leaking from the plane when we took off. That was a nice cheerful thing to learn! In addition to the three W.D.s we had Mr. Timmins, the well-known mining man, his cousin, and an official from the Newfoundland Government aboard the plane as passengers.

The plane crew investigated. We could all smell gas but nobody could find where it came from. The stout W.D. was reclining on top of one of the spare gas tanks. The engineer looked at her as though he suspected she had sabotaged the tank with her weight. (He was too polite to say so.)

The Padre we had picked up in Montreal was still with us. The co-pilot came aft and asked, "Can any of you fellows really smell gas?"

"I can smell onion gas," the Padre retorted. "The stay at Gander hasn't helped them any."

The cause of the trouble was finally located. A trickle of gas could be seen coming from the filling fixture in one wing. It was a wrong thing to have happened, but it was quite evident that either the tank had been filled too full or the cap had not been screwed down tight. The pilot decided to go on to Goose.

Everyone stationed at Goose boasted of the wonderful flying weather we enjoy at that base. We boasted of its freedom from fog, and the fact that it is rarely closed down for low ceilings or any other cause.

The crew having satisfied themselves that the reported gas leak was of no great importance, we pushed on. When we were within 100 miles of Goose the weather became unfavourable and the port closed down again. There was nothing for us to do but turn back again to Gander. When we finally arrived a number of R.C.A.F. officials were on hand to give us a ribbing.

"What did you turn back for? There's never any fog at Goose!"

"Who ever heard of a low ceiling at Goose? Tut-tut!"

"I heard they never even have rain at Goose. The sun shines all the time," piped in another.

"It wasn't on account of the weather we turned back," an officer from Goose Bay told them. "We made the weather an excuse to turn back, but what we're really after is your money." This officer had been lucky, as I had, when playing knock rummy the night before. We had both relieved the Ganderites of a little of their hard-earned money. His retort held them for a while.

We returned to our quarters and as we entered we were the target for a few more gibes. "Like Gander, eh? Going to become permanent guests?"

We washed and shaved and then four of us stood outside waiting for the others to join us. We were intending to dine in the cafeteria at the end of the street.

Gander airport was a scene of great activity. The bad weather had been quite general. Closing of airports along the Atlantic coast had caused congestion right back to the assembly lines in the factories. Now that the weather had lifted at Gander, bombers were coming and going in one continuous stream. We stood near the east side of the huge airport watching the great powerful planes take off one after another. It was a fascinating sight. The planes became airborne just abreast of where we were standing. They looked like great gulls which had over-eaten as they came lumbering down the runways at ever increasing speed. To my inexperienced eyes it looked as if some of them could never get into the air before they crashed into the huge mound of earth which had been thrown up at the end of the runway, where a deep ditch was being excavated for a sewer. At the other side of the ditch was a barbed-wire fence. My eyes followed one plane after another as they just nicely cleared the ditch and the wire. They were certainly just about carrying their maximum loads.

The regularity with which they came down and then took off grew monotonous. I turned away to look down the street. Suddenly I heard one of the Ferry Command pilots say, "My God, here's one that's not going to make it!" I turned and looked back at the runway. The group of us just stood there gaping. I found myself trying to lift the plane by mental suggestion. It came thundering along nearer and nearer to the ditch. Finally it began to lift. The wheels, however, hit the top of the mound of earth. The plane bounced. The pilot was evidently making titanic efforts to keep it air-borne. Then to our horror we saw it dip and the wheels caught in the barbed-wire fence. We all expected the plane to tip forward and go end over and bow first. By some strange miracle it didn't. What it did do was to pick up about a hundred yards of

fence like a hawk would pick up a rabbit, and then it went sailing off into the air.

It was quite obvious that the pilot couldn't fly the Atlantic with a hundred yards of barbed-wire fence dangling from his wheels and trailing behind him. He circled the airport. We heard the dismal howling of the sirens as the fire-trucks and ambulances raced onto the concourse.

"I'd get rid of my gas before I attempted to land that crate," one Ferry Command pilot said to another.

"You bet! He'll dump his gas, never worry."

He did dump his gas. It seemed a long, long time that he circled just clear of the airport while dumping his gas. We saw the pilot was trying to shake the infernal wire-fence clear of his landing gear but it was no dice. Getting rid of the gas made the bomber lighter to land and it cut down the risk of the plane catching fire when the pilot was forced to make his crash-landing.

I saw men who looked like creatures from another world come onto the flying-field. They were the rescue squad dressed in asbestos clothing. We saw the plane fly down wind and then circle around and get ready to come in for the landing. I don't know how long one's heart can stop beating without death ensuing, but mine seemed to stay still as I watched that drama of the skies coming to its conclusion. With super-human effort, amazing courage and skill, that young American pilot set his plane down and in some miraculous manner kept her from crashing until a great deal of momentum was off her. Then the bomber swayed until the wings sent showers of sparks flying in all directions . . . but she stayed right side up. Finally she stopped. She was resting on one wing. The crew were jumping to safety as the fire trucks dashed up. Smoke was pouring from under the hood of the

engines. It was all over—everyone was safe. The firemen even extinguished the blaze.

“Go to the top of your class, Joe, old boy. I don’t know who you are, but you sure know your stuff. You’ve got what it takes!” said one of the Ferry Command pilots as we turned toward the cafeteria and dinner. That dinner actually tasted better even if it had been kept waiting.

* * * * *

We made Goose the next day. There was no word of the convoy. W/T reception was bad but I knew the convoy wouldn’t break wireless silence unless the matter was urgent. Everybody was asking me where the convoy was. Army officials were expecting 500 troops . . . 500 troops were expecting to leave. The Construction Company officials were waiting for cement . . . The R.C.A.F. had new motorized transport on the deck of one of the ships . . . And perhaps most impatient of all were those who knew there was liquor and beer in one of the ships.

When you don’t know the answer one can always look wise, wink an eye, and say, “Sorry, old chap! Everything is O.K. Just can’t answer your questions in detail for security reasons.”

I didn’t feel as happy about the convoy as I led them to believe. They had been eight days at sea. I felt sorry for the troops who I knew must be cramped aboard their ship. It was never intended they spend so many days at sea, on board that small pleasure steamer pressed into service as a troop-transport.

I decided to do a weather patrol and see if I couldn’t locate the convoy. I made arrangements with the U.S.A.A.F. and a Mitchell B-25 was placed at my disposal. It was perfectly lousy flying weather. There was practically no ceiling at Goose. Thunder-storms were all around the area inland, moving towards Lake Melville.

At sea off the coast we knew the fog was as thick as cotton batting.

The Mitchell B-25 was fitted with the very latest of instruments. Her crew were particularly youthful but they were also very experienced fliers. As they stood around in the Major's office receiving their instructions I couldn't help but compare them with some of the Nazi airmen I had seen landed earlier in the war as prisoners at Quebec. My mental decision was that I wouldn't trade one of those American boys for a dozen Nazi airmen.

Officially Goose Bay was closed down when we took the air, but the big powerful plane just seemed capable of overcoming any adverse conditions. We hopped over the tree-tops and went tearing down Lake Melville as if the devil was riding our tail. We cut down the "back way" after picking up Eskimo Island right dead ahead. I was sitting between the pilots and the navigator. Things happen awfully fast when you are travelling 300 miles an hour . . . It hardly seemed possible we were covering five miles in one minute.

We hopped over the strip of land and flew over the waters of Hamilton Inlet. We had to remain below 200 feet in order to see the ocean.

I picked up Tumble Down Dick Island. The fog hung low and from the air the island looked like a bun with thick white icing on the top. As we flew towards The Wolves, the ceiling became lower and the fog thickened. All the islands were covered in a heavy white shroud. The fog was much thicker over the island than over the open sea—and then we ran into fog that was utterly impenetrable as far as vision was concerned. It was a queer experience flying, into what looked like cotton batting. I felt as if I had suddenly been isolated from the rest of the world. There we were, hurtling along at five miles a minute, we couldn't see ten feet ahead of us, and I had

no feeling of speed or movement. It seemed as if we were suspended in space. We had to climb up to 500 feet because we knew there were many icebergs in the vicinity. We had spotted two just before the fog shut down really tight.

Such are the marvels of modern inventions that we located the convoy without even seeing them. We pinpointed their position and informed them of their exact location. Next we flew back and forth across the convoy's intended line of advance. It so happened that 47 miles ahead of them in a certain direction the fog cleared. We were able to pass on this information also. We next flew around the fog area and found that the thick fog was mostly off shore and that the area inside of a line drawn from Cape Harrison to the Little Wolves was practically clear of fog. Due to co-operation between the Air Force and the Navy, the convoy arrived safely in port next morning.

Incidentally, when returning to Rigolet we sighted the largest iceberg I have ever seen in northern waters. The portion out of water was as big as the Royal York Hotel in Toronto. Usually icebergs in northern waters are much smaller than those one sees in the Antarctic, but this particular berg was the grand-daddy of them all. We were able to notify the convoy of this particular danger, which was right in their course. This berg actually stranded for a while in water which was over a hundred fathoms deep.

We returned by the "back way" also. We flew so low that we just cleared the tops of the trees or bushes as we hopped over the points that jutted from the mainland out into the lake. The pilot did this so that he could keep track of his position. He could see the water beneath him and the outline of the shore. We dodged two thunderstorms and just cut through the edge of another. When

we cut through that edge it seemed as if we were flying through a waterfall. I was watching ahead. Suddenly I was conscious of something looming ahead. The plane rose and it was gone, having passed under us. The navigator pointed to Sandy Point which juts out from North West River. We swept past Rabbit Island, hopped Groves Point, and then I knew that Goose Airport was just five miles or one minute's flying, ahead.

Suddenly we saw the bluff loom dark ahead of us. Visibility was practically nil. I heard the co-pilot giving the pilot the heights; 150 . . . 135 . . . 130 . . . 120—and then I saw the road and trucks which had stopped while the drivers looked wildly for the plane they could hear but failed to see. Seconds later we were sweeping into the airport and made a perfect landing.

When I had sent off my reports and signals I wandered over to the R.C.A.F. Mess. Al Cheeseman came towards me. "Were you in that B-25 that just came in over the tree-tops?" he asked me.

I told him I had been.

"Well, try that stunt a few more times and we'll be buying you lilies! The trouble is *you* won't be able to appreciate them."

I'm still convinced that Al was suffering from a little bit of professional envy. I am also convinced that I flew with one of the best weather patrol pilots we had up north, and there were some pretty good men flying out of Goose Bay.

CHAPTER 12

We Find Bill Napier

BILL NAPIER is officially known as Squadron Leader Napier, R.C.A.F. He was in command of the Fighter Squadron attached to Goose Bay defences. He was about twenty-four years of age when I knew him, and Fate had two strikes on him before he was drafted to Goose Bay.

Bill had been piloting fighter planes during the Battle of Britain. On several occasions he had been shot or forced down. On one occasion he broke his neck. His parents live in the Maritimes. The kids of his home town look upon Bill Napier as their own personal hero. The home town papers have, *on three different occasions*, published the rather sorrowful news that Bill "was missing and believed dead". Bill has the disconcerting habit of always turning up like the proverbial bad penny, to the delight of his mother and the kids.

While I was writing these things about Bill Napier, my wife walked in with a newspaper in her hand. "Squadron Leader Napier will be in good hands from now on," she told me waving the paper. "Here's his picture in the paper—he is going to marry into the Navy. He's marrying a Wren—Miss McNeill." So Bill is safe at last—all danger past.

One day towards the end of August, 1943, I flew from Goose Bay to Rigolet with Group Captain Evans. We flew in a Norseman belonging to the U.S.A.A.F. The flying conditions were far from good.

I had just returned from my flight in the Mitchell B-25 when a signal was received from Rigolet informing me that the S.S. ———— had arrived from Hudson Bay. The Captain reported that he had seen nothing of a dump-scow which had left the same day. This was very disconcerting, because I knew the dump-scow only had water and fuel to last her two days longer than we had planned she would require to make the journey. I reported my anxiety to Group Captain Evans and he immediately offered to fly me to Rigolet to interview the Captain of the steamer which had arrived, in order to learn the most detailed information regarding the weather etc. encountered since he had left Cape Chidley. It just seemed at that particular time that the weather-man determined to prove that conditions could be just as bad at Goose as any other airport on the Atlantic coast.

Al Cheeseman was on leave. When Group Captain Evans tried to take off in the "Hookensniffie" she wouldn't start. "Temperamental dame, this," Evans informed me. "She is evidently a one-man woman."

Rather than wait until the Norseman was made ready for the flight, Bert Evans got in touch with the Officer Commanding the U.S.A.A.F. and obtained permission to take the American Norseman. We took a couple of Army officers including Colonel Goodeve to Rigolet, where they intended to inspect the defence force. It was planned to leave them at Rigolet and then take me up the Labrador coast to search the many inlets. My guess was that if the dump-scow had run out of fuel or water she would have tried to make a sheltered harbour with a good anchorage before her fuel ran out completely.

What a trip that turned out to be! When landing at Rigolet the tide was against the wind and the water was kicked up into dangerous choppy seas. While circling around looking the situation over and trying to determine

the best direction from which to land, the motor suddenly went dead and Bert had to make up his mind quickly. We did all right when landing, although it felt as if we had knocked the floats off her when she hit the first time. After some frantic waving and signalling we made it known we were drifting and couldn't use the engine. After alternate bouts of praying and swearing a motor-boat finally put out from Rigolet and took us in tow. We landed the military officers and had the engine fixed, and then Bert and I took off again. I never before in all my life experienced the "bumping" we received during the next few hours. While off the Naval Signal Station, which was under the command of Lieutenant Rees-Thomas, we fell about 300 feet. Crossing the headlands we bounced up and down exactly like leaves blown about in the autumn gales.

To be perfectly frank, that trip was the only one that I didn't enjoy, but it was worth the trouble. We found our lost lamb chugging along at all of four knots and were assured by the master that he could make Rigolet under his own power, *providing the weather remained favourable*. I learned afterwards that his fuel wouldn't burn well, and he had experienced fog which had been followed by rough weather. But all's well that ends well.

We returned to Rigolet and took the military officers aboard again and flew back to Goose, following the Grand Mer almost as far as North West River. The Grand Mer was discovered by the early French Traders. It is an inlet which runs into the interior of Labrador almost parallel to Lake Melville. It had not been surveyed or sounded when I was up there, but it looked as if it might be one of the best and most sheltered harbours along the Labrador coast.

When we crossed over North West River we noticed several planes in the sky flying in unusual directions.

Upon arrival we heard the reason. Squadron Leader Bill Napier was missing. He had taken a Sergeant up for instruction at 1000. He had announced his intention of returning to base in time for lunch. The Control Tower had last seen him heading in the general direction of North West River. When he failed to show up at 1400, planes were sent to search the North West River district. I notified all ships coming in and going out to keep a careful watch for the yellow Harvard plane both on the lake and in the woods surrounding the lake. It was felt that should Bill have got lost he might try to make a forced landing near a ship or on a stretch of sandy beach.

After a first hurried search over an area covered by a circle fifty miles radius from the base, a more systematic and thorough search was organized. So many things could have happened to Bill. He could have crashed while doing acrobatics. He could have crashed into a hill during low visibility. He could have been forced down by engine trouble.

Several things were certain. The limit of the plane's endurance was 1530 that afternoon. It was obvious that Bill had no intention to remain away from the base after lunch, because he hadn't taken any emergency supplies with him, not even a chocolate bar—and Bill was fond of chocolate bars. The plane was fitted with a small radio capable of sending messages about 35 to 50 miles. The Station W/T expert stated that 75 miles was the absolute maximum range of the set under ideal conditions.

During an emergency of this kind every available plane is pressed into service. Ground crews, and others, volunteer to fly as extra observers because it so often happens that planes will pass over or near to the scene of a crash without seeing the plane or the personnel. The more eyes, the more chance of seeing the missing plane. The eyes of searchers must be keen and their minds alert

to interpret anything strange their eyes may register upon their brain. For instance, sometimes the only evidence of a crash visible from the air may be a slash in the woods due to broken tree-tops caused as the missing plane dives into the forest; or a piece of floating wreckage, gear or equipment on the surface of a lake or river. Or then again, it may be just a blob of colour like a small isolated burn, which is foreign to the landscape but which wouldn't even be noticed by inexperienced eyes.

Upon seeing and knowing these things the question of life or death so often depends. High-power binoculars and glasses are also useful to identify objects seen. Planes on rescue missions usually fly low; first they search the places where a plane would be likely to make a forced landing. Flying up and down river valleys between mountain ranges is an experience never to be forgotten.

I volunteered to fly as observer during the search for Bill Napier, and on the fourth day, when all hope of finding Bill and his co-pilot alive had just about been abandoned, a radio operator reported that he had heard Squadron Leader Napier speaking over the air. At first the man wasn't believed. However, a W/T watch was set and sure enough Bill came back on the air again about 0900. A rough D.F. bearing was obtained. Bill was sending on a bearing roughly 40 or 220 degrees from the base.

Pilot Jack Woods (one of the famous bush pilots belonging to the 164th squadron) walked into the Control Room. He had just arrived from Moncton, N.B. F.O. Tom Cummings and P.O. Al Campbell and I were plotting the bearings on the chart when Jack walked in. We told him what had happened. The message received from Bill Napier read, "I am down on the sand bar in a large river flowing south. I believe I am west of the base. We are well."

We traced the bearing to the west of the base, but according to the map it crossed no river running south. At least, it crossed no river flowing in a southerly direction within two hundred miles of Goose Bay. Then P.O. Campbell said, "There is a river flowing south-west of here. I saw it only yesterday. We followed it down some way but turned back towards Goose when we were one hundred miles from the base. We thought it was too far away."

Tom Cummings then remembered that Eric Fry had photographed the area south and west of Goose Bay just before he left for Fort Chimo the end of June. He sent a messenger to obtain the photographs and he also sent for the loan of a U.S.A.A.F. map.

Eric Fry's photographs and the chart were compared. Eric's pictures showed several rivers which were not marked on the chart. One river of considerable size was shown running south. In that river were spots that could have been sand bars.

We felt we were hot on the trail until the Signals officer poured water on our enthusiasm by reminding us that Bill's radio would not send more than seventy-five miles under ideal conditions. The river flowing south was more than one hundred miles from Goose Bay Airport. The sand bars were between one hundred and thirty and one hundred and sixty miles away. "That is definitely not the river," argued the Signals officer.

Quite an argument ensued between P.O. Campbell and the Signals officer regarding radio and the merits of the particular type of radio with which the Harvard was equipped.

"What's over to the north on bearing 220?" Jack Woods asked.

"There are quite a number of rivers flowing south well within the hundred-mile limit," Tom Cummings told

Woods; then he added, "I personally don't think Bill's down to the north. We covered every one of those rivers as if with a small-tooth comb. To tell you the truth, Jack, I don't think Bill is down within a *hundred* miles of Goose. Damn it! We've had fifty planes covering the area for four days. If any one of those planes had flown over Bill he would have set fire to his plane if necessary in order to attract attention . . . No, I'm convinced that Bill is farther away than we figured he'd be."

"Me too," said Al Campbell ungrammatically. "I'm all for picking up that river I saw yesterday and following it down no matter how far it goes or where . . . What say, Jack?"

Woods said "O.K." and that was that.

All available planes were still in the air searching. Jack Woods picked his crew and I had the good fortune to be picked as extra observer. While the men going in the rescue plane were having an early lunch, the ground crew prepared everything for the flight. Two bags were filled with emergency gear. One had camping equipment, the other contained provisions. Both were fitted with parachutes to float them to the ground. Two expert parachute jumpers were detailed to come along in case the missing airmen were found to be injured. If this had been the case the paratroops could have jumped, rendered first aid and stayed with the injured men to care for them until the rescue had been properly organized. I saw a visiting Squadron Leader slip a bottle of whiskey into a sleeping-bag amongst the camping equipment and on it was attached a note: "Good Luck . . . Drink hearty".

After lunch we adjusted our 'chutes and took our places in the rescue plane. The doors had been removed to facilitate dumping the bags should we locate the missing fliers.

Pilot Woods winged his way up the Hamilton River and then shot over towards the position in which Al Campbell had reported seeing the river flowing south. The wind tore into the body of the plane through the open doors and, when she side-slipped and bumped, it was almost impossible for those of us who were searching the terrain, to stay in the plane. The floor of the transport was slippery as the very devil. We located two pieces of lumber which were long enough to lash into position across the open doors. They gave me a feeling of greater security. I don't doubt but what I will do the right thing with my parachute if I ever do have to jump, but I'm not particularly anxious to test myself before it is absolutely necessary.

Ninety miles away from the airport we hit the river for which we were looking. Jack Woods swooped down like a hawk striking, and straightened away at a height which gave the observers ideal conditions. We could see the river and the country each side of the river, over to the edge of the mountains.

Never before had I flown low over a river following each twist and turn, with mountains ahead, and on both sides. It was a thrilling experience. It was a happy one because of the faith we passengers had in the ability of Jack Woods as a pilot.

I went up for'ard and stood with Al Campbell as we roared down the valley above the river. The engines were wide open. One second it looked as if we were going to crash into the mountain-side ahead of us, and next moment we were banking at 90 degrees in time to round a bend in the river. Bumps! . . . We hit one air pocket which dropped us so low I saw the knuckles of Jack's fingers turn white as he gripped the wheel. After he had steadied the plane he gave us a look and a cheerful grin spread over his face. "Nearly muffed that one," he laughed.

We came to a lake. The river widened until it was fully two miles across from the east to west bank. "Big river—but where in blazes are the ruddy sand banks?" the pilot hollered to Al Campbell. At the end of the lake the river forked to the right and left. It made a perfect V and both legs flowed in a general southerly direction.

Al Campbell suggested we follow the left branch as it flowed nearer to the base. Jack turned to follow the left branch and just as he did so we were electrified!—the W/T operator was adjusting his instrument when we heard Bill Napier come in so strong that we could recognize his voice.

"I am on a sand bar in a large river flowing south. I am west of the base. No plane has passed over me yet."

It is hard to describe the effect these words had on the search party. "He can't be more than twenty miles away, coming in that strong," Jack Woods yelled cheerily. We followed the left branch of the river down twenty miles or so, and seeing no sand bars, we circled and flew back to where the river forked. We hadn't flown more than five miles down the right branch of the river before we sighted the first sand bar. It was easy to feel the reaction upon all those in the plane. We felt like kids playing the old parlour game of hide-and-seek. We were decidedly growing "warm". Two steep banks, to make two almost right-angled turns, and another long stretch of river came into view. In this stretch were three islands or sand banks; some had a considerable growth of trees in the centre. Jack flew low so that the observers could see every detail. Then those of us who were up in the bow of the plane saw some falls.

Below the falls were rapids, and beyond the rapids was another sand bar . . . and yes!—I could see it through my glasses—on the sand bar was the plane . . .

Bill's voice could be heard on the radio. "I can hear the engines of a plane . . . You are coming nearer . . . keep coming . . ."

There was silence for a moment and then we heard Bill speak again. "I can see your plane . . . Oh God! you do look good to me!" He voiced it as a prayer.

Plenty of daylight still remained. We could see that both men were in good shape as they walked around the plane. It was impossible to land the plane. We were flying, so we dipped down low over the top of the missing fliers and waved to them. The crew in the plane hugged each other and patted each other on the back. It certainly was good to see the two airmen able to walk around. Their plane didn't look so badly damaged. It looked like a woodcock I had shot once upon a time. It was flattened low on the ground, and its wings spread out.

We were exactly 138 miles from Goose Bay Airport when we found the missing fliers. How the Harvard's radio was able to send that distance is a mystery to this day. A dozen experiments failed to duplicate its performance. Perhaps it was as Padre Anderson said in his sermon next Sunday: "Those who have great faith and keep a brave heart are often rewarded by the Lord." Padre Anderson had flown with us as an extra observer. He was a great friend of Bill Napier.

Bill and his companion were rescued that same afternoon by Group Captain Evans and Pilot Officer Christie. They flew in with the Norseman and landed it down river from the sand bar.

Bill and his co-pilot had eaten nothing but a handful of berries they picked from bushes near the river bank. They had plenty of water—too much of it!

Group Captain Evans took along a gallon of hot coffee and some sandwiches. As Pilot Officer Christie taxied the plane up to the point of the sand bar to allow

the fliers to wade out and climb aboard, Bert Evans stood on one of the floats. He had a mug of coffee in one hand and a big sandwich in the other. "Next time you go on a fishing trip and intend to stay away four days, let us know beforehand . . . You had me so worried I haven't had a bite since you were reported missing!" he chided Bill, and then bit deep into the sandwich and munched away hungrily while Bill and his companion waded out to the plane. They love their little jokes in the Air Force.

I think Al Cheeseman was rather disappointed that he wasn't on hand to conduct the search and save Bill and his co-pilot from the wilderness. When he did arrive back from leave, he went to work immediately and salvaged the plane. Most of the officers at the base were satisfied that the plane would have to remain where it was forced down until after the freeze-up in the fall. It would be simple enough to fit skis and fly it off once the river was frozen over. This was a challenge to Cheeseman's professional pride. He had other ideas, but he didn't tell a soul what they were. I heard Bill Napier talking seriously to Al one evening in the Mess.

"No fooling now Al! I'll never forgive you if you don't let me fly that plane back to Goose! I crashed it and I'm the man to fly it back. Now promise me?" he pleaded.

Al and Bill were good friends. "Well, if you really want to fly her back you better come with me tomorrow. She's all ready now," Al told Bill, to his surprise.

They were up bright and early next morning. They took off in the Norseman. There was considerable discussion in the Mess at breakfast about the purpose of their mission. Most of the officers argued that it just wasn't possible to fly the Harvard off that spit of sand until after the freeze-up.

Al, however, knows all the tricks about landing and taking off in the bush. The engines had been overhauled

and repaired; a new propeller had been shipped; all was ready and Al had watched the weather. Came the day when the weather man predicted rain for several days. That was exactly what Cheeseman had been waiting for. He figured that several days good heavy rain would pack and harden the sand sufficiently to permit taking off in the plane. He was willing to risk his neck to back up his theory—but he wouldn't double-cross Bill Napier. If Bill wanted to fly his plane off that was his privilege. Bill did fly her back. He arrived at Goose in the Harvard in time for supper.

After Cheeseman returned in the "Hookensniffie", Bill took him to one side. "Al, I want to buy that salvage crew of yours a case of Scotch. Is it O.K. with you? I'd like to give it to them tonight. Perhaps you'd give them a day off tomorrow?"

"Give *me* the Scotch, and I'll give *them* the holiday," Al kidded.

"I thought you were on the wagon?" Bill came back.

"So I am," said Al, "but there's no harm being well prepared in case I fall off . . . is there?"

"Seriously, Al, you have no objections, have you?" Bill is a serious kind of a lad.

"Not in the least. Give the liquor to Landry. Put him in charge of it. He'll see nobody gets more than enough."

Thus ended another episode at Goose Bay, and another case of Scotch.

* * * * *

"Oh God, I'm hungry!" groaned one airman with a grin on his lips which was meant to be cheerful.

"Cheer up, Pal . . . One never dies until his time comes."

"Don't I know it," retorted the other. "What worries me is that if I don't soon get a square meal my stomach

is going to have a collision with my back-bone. I might die of a fractured spine."

And so they joked at the end of the second day. But as day followed day, and they remained undiscovered by the planes they knew were searching for them, they grew silent. They were determined to save what little energy they had left in order to keep the tiny spark of life alive in their tired and pain-racked bodies just in case the miracle happened.

Facing death in the heat of battle; facing death amidst the noise and confusion of modern warfare; facing sudden death surrounded by many companions under conditions which permit of action and movement—this is a very different matter from facing death of slow starvation and exposure, with only two companions, confined on a barren rock located in the heart of the Arctic wilderness. And yet this was the experience of three Royal Air Force Ferry Command airmen who lived to tell the tale.

I heard the story one night when I was over at the American side visiting. At Goose Bay we always referred to the U.S.A.A.F. as the American side because it was located at the south-west corner of the huge airport, while the R.C.A.F. section was located at the north-east corner. Although no consideration had been given to providing space and accommodation for the U.S.A.A.F. in the original plans drawn up in 1941, when I was at Goose in 1943 the U.S.A.A.F. were three times as strong as the R.C.A.F. and they were doing most of the work.

At the time of which I write quite a number of British Lancasters and other types of planes used on the European battle front were being flown from Britain over to America for training and other purposes. Many of the crews stopped over at Goose to refuel their planes and have a short rest and a decent meal.

The big Hampden bomber was on its way to British Columbia when it met with disaster. Aboard it were Robert E. Coffman, of Baton Rouge, La., pilot; Ronald E. Snow, of Digby, N.S., radio operator; and Norman E. (Ted) Greenaway of Camrose, Alta., as navigator. Greenaway is a Flying Officer in the R.C.A.F.

The bomber had just soared over Greenland and was crossing Davis Strait when she developed engine trouble. In spite of all efforts they were forced down into the sea. The survivors managed to clear the rubber dinghy before the plane broke in two and sank. They looked around dismally. Their position was pretty grim. Three men in a boat, surrounded by ice, with Greenland's icy mountains over in the east rising from the sea. They picked up the paddles and started for the shore.

The land was fifteen miles away and they paddled for twenty hours. Most of the time one or other of the airmen kept busy shoving their frail craft clear of ice cakes and ice floes which could easily have cut the rubber raft to ribbons had they collided.

There were icebergs in the vicinity and during the night they had the rather awe-inspiring experience of hearing some of these icebergs crash together with the noise of thunder; and they peered into the darkness around them alert to avoid being crushed between two bodies of ice as they came together under the influence of the tide, wind and Arctic current.

Just when they felt certain they would make the mainland within an hour, their dinghy was caught in the grip of the current and nothing they could do in their exhausted condition brought them any closer to the land. It was just like a nightmare. They paddled and they paddled until they had used up all their energy and strength but they got no nearer to the land.

Their small craft was caught in the grip of a power greater than their own and was being carried God knew where . . . *Yes, God knew where.* The three airmen didn't know it at the time, but the fact that the Arctic current prevented them landing on the coast undoubtedly saved their lives . . . After drifting helplessly for several miles they were carried close to a pinnacle of rock that rose straight up from the sea. It looked bold and forbidding, but the airmen decided that anything was better than to remain any longer in the rubber dinghy. They didn't relish spending another night at sea with the ghostly shapes of icebergs crashing and thundering all around them. It wasn't so bad while the moon was above the horizon. In fact, it was awe-inspiring and beautiful. But in the dark the conditions were little less than terrifying. So they landed.

They dragged their rubber dinghy up clear of high-water mark, intending to use it as a shelter against the wind. Next they held a Tarpaulin Muster. A Tarpaulin Muster is the term used to cover the practice of mustering and checking everything a small group of wrecked mariners may possess in order that the food may be rationed out evenly, and the rest of the articles used to the greatest benefit of all concerned.

A careful check showed their inventory consisted of a Very pistol with 27 cartridges; a flag to be used as a distress signal; 45 malted milk tablets; 4 squares of barley sugar; a package of chewing gum; a few energy tablets; and what personal belongings they happened to have in their pockets. While turning out their pockets they unknowingly uncovered two items of greatest importance. One was a small mirror such as can be bought in any Five-and-Ten Cent Store, and the other was some chocolate. The chocolate was sodden and crushed but it was there, and perhaps it was the nourishment derived from

this bar of chocolate which provided the very narrow margin of safety which saved them from death. As Al Cheeseman often said: "When in a jam look after the small things and the details—the big things will take care of themselves." He meant that it was folly to neglect the smallest detail or discard the smallest item when faced with danger and possible death. It is natural to do the most obvious things for self-preservation, but often the item which might, in the final analysis, mean the difference between life and death would be some insignificant article the value of which couldn't be appreciated at the moment. How sound his advice turned out to be was amply illustrated by these three marooned airmen. It was the little ten-cent mirror that finally saved their lives.

They set the rubber dinghy up under the lee of a rocky ledge and crawled inside to rest. They were warmly clad in their flying suits but their boots were wet and tight. The airmen very sensibly removed their boots and tucked their feet into their flying suits. This gave them a measure of warmth and saved them from severe frost-bite.

The first two days they spent on the rock, there was sleet and snow. The wind blew with gale force and lashed at them in all its bitter fury. They huddled together for comfort and warmth and trimmed the dinghy so that the bottom acted as a wind-break during the various shifts of the wind. They rationed themselves to three malted milk tablets each day and one square the size of a postage stamp, of the chocolate. Even at that rate they only had rations for five days.

At the end of two days the weather cleared and turned colder. The temperature dropped to below zero. However, they could stand up, they could move around, and they could keep circulation going by exercise. One of the party scaled the pinnacle of rock and lashed their

distress flag to a piece of lumber salvaged from the wreckage of their plane. He planted it as firmly as possible in a cairn of rock fragments he collected with considerable effort.

Forty-eight hours of sub-zero weather is a long, long time when it must be spent huddled up with a rubber dinghy as your only shelter. They combed the sides of the rock but couldn't find any driftwood with which to make a fire.

At the end of the fifth day after they crashed, the first of which was spent at sea, and the other four on the rock, the clouds dropped low and the wind once more howled with gale force. On several occasions the marooned airmen thought they heard the sound of aircraft motors overhead, but visibility prevented them seeing the planes. They fired some of the Very lights each time they heard the planes but this brought no satisfactory results. The knowledge that searchers were out looking for them gave them hope and they determined to fight on to the bitter end. They reduced their rations to one malted milk tablet and a piece of the barley sugar. They were rapidly growing weaker.

It is strange, but I have heard so many other men who were lost and without food, tell of the wonderful dreams they had of thick sirloin steaks smothered with onions, roast chickens, and all the foods they always delighted in eating when they were obtainable. As it was these men tried to keep up each other's spirits talking about how they would enjoy a feed of the despised carrots they had always been served when in England.

On the ninth day a ship hove in sight and their hopes rose high—but they discovered the wind had blown away their distress signal and the ship didn't see the last of the Very lights. She passed them by! A snow squall blew



(Top) Post Office at Goose Bay; (bottom) Skilled surgeons operate in modern hospital, built in two months.



Combined Forces of Goose Bay hold Church Parade.
 (Top) U.S. A.A.F. unit; (centre right) Civilian workers; (centre left) R.C.A.F. section; (bottom) Brigadier Most Rev. C. L. Nellegan (R.C. Chaplain General of Canadian Armed Forces) who celebrated Mass, with the Author, Army Officers, and K. of C. workers, at Goose Bay.

up and closed her out from their view—and shut them off like a curtain from their one and only hope.

Their feet were giving them most trouble and pain. To ease them they slit the legs of their flying suits and placed their limbs together in order to obtain greater body heat. With the passing of the ship it appeared that there was nothing left but to resign themselves to die. They were so very, very weak, so very tired . . . Death would only be a longer, deeper sleep, free from pain . . . free from any further mental anguish, free from that terrible reaction that followed seeing real hope dashed to the ground . . .

Resigned at last, their food gone, they laid themselves down bravely to meet death as only brave men know how. But their time had not yet come. This terrible experience was only a crucial test for their physical and moral courage. They had stood up mentally and morally and they had survived physically one of the most severe endurance tests it is possible to imagine, and their courage was to be rewarded . . .

Making her way down from the Polar Seas was a little Norwegian steamer. She had been working up north taking stores and supplies and transporting men to outlandish places in Baffin Land and other Arctic out-posts which were being linked together by the United States and Canadian Governments into what is now known as the vast Arctic Project. Her task done for the winter, the little Norwegian vessel—I believe her name is the *Bear*—was dashing south trying to escape the grip of the Arctic winter which was blowing hard on her heels.

The Captain was anxious, and the Chief Engineer was worried. They had to make all possible speed to prevent being caught and frozen in. The engines hadn't been overhauled or refitted for many months. They had been tested to the limits of their endurance bucking ice, going

full astern from full ahead to avoid collisions, racing beyond their normal speed to pass between fields of ice before they closed together and crushed her like an egg . . . The Chief with canny intuition had a feeling that they would have to stop before the main bearings ran hot—his experienced nose and his ears told him that trouble was brewing down below.

He climbed the bridge. "Captain, it's no use! If there's a half decent anchorage near here it would be advisable to stop for a few hours. I've got to take a look at those main bearings—a few hours' delay now may save us from a serious break-down tomorrow. That's my candid opinion, and I'd like you to take my advice."

The Captain took the Chief Engineer's advice. He altered course and he dropped anchor about seven miles off the pinnacle of rock upon which the airmen were lying waiting for the merciful release of death.

It was well on into the eleventh day when Coffman untangled himself from the others and crawled out from beneath the dinghy. His mouth was parched and dry. He felt he just had to quench his thirst by eating some snow. It would at least cool the burning sensation deep down in his throat. And as he gazed around hopelessly he suddenly jerked himself upright . . . He couldn't believe his eyes! It must be the hallucinations which precede death! It could be a mirage—It *couldn't* be real, . . . not a real ship with human beings on board and only a few miles away.

Then the excitement of the first moments subsided. Even if it was a ship—if it was a real ship—how could he communicate their plight? It was just another bitter disappointment. The last Very light had been fired. Their last match had been found wet and useless. They had intended to use that match and set fire to their clothes

as a last final resort if they sighted a ship or a plane—and then the sun shone through the storm clouds.

The sun! The sun which they hadn't seen for days . . . the sun and that mirror! The direction was right . . . it might work . . . it *might*. He crawled over to the dinghy and roused his companions. They took considerable rousing. They had gone into the sleep which would have ended in death had they not been forcibly shaken back to life.

And then started two hours of the most intense mental agony that men have ever been asked to endure and retain their senses. They used the tiny ten-cent mirror as a heliograph. They grew numb and cold using it, they had to beat their hands and warm them and take it in turns. They flashed and they flashed. Every now and again the sun would hide itself behind a cloud and their hearts would know the depths of utter despair. Rescue was so near—and yet it was so far. But the mirror was very small and the distance was very great . . . And the men on the ship were very busy—they were all *very* busy, excepting only one. That one man was Major John T. Crowell of the U.S. Army. He was a passenger on the little vessel making his way back to civilization after doing a term of duty up north. He enjoyed wild scenery. He had seen that pinnacle of rock jutting up out of the sea. He had called the Captain's attention to it. The Captain showed him the position of the rock on his chart.

"That rock is the top of a mountain thousands of feet high. There is deep water—hundreds of fathoms—all around it," the Captain told him.

Intrigued, the Major picked up a pair of powerful binoculars the better to examine this freak of nature. He looked and he took down the glasses and blinked his eyes. The rock was blinking at him! That was ridiculous, to say the least. He looked again. Perhaps it was the sun glittering on a bit of smooth quartz. He focused his

glasses carefully. There it was again! There could be no mistake this time—it was a signal of some kind. He reported the fact to the Norwegian Captain.

The Captain knew no human being was supposed to be on that pinnacle of rock. It could mean only two things. Either they were shipwrecked mariners or they were men belonging to another secret Nazi base. If they were Nazi they could easily be luring them on to their doom as they had the Danish patrol on the East Coast.

The Captain ordered a boat away and in it he sent the best marksmen he had on board. Major Crowell went with them. Fighting was his profession. It wasn't long before the strong, kindly Norwegian seamen were assisting the exhausted fliers into the ship's boat. They had persevered signalling for three hours before they saw their efforts rewarded. Now they were within a few minutes of actual rescue they had all collapsed due to nervous reaction and physical fatigue.

That is almost the end of the story. Engines repaired, the little "Polar Bear" rushed them south. A signal was sent and a cutter from the U.S. Navy came dashing to meet them with medical assistance. Before many days they were flown in to Montreal and placed under treatment in the Royal Victoria Hospital. The daughter of an old college chum of mine helped nurse them back to health.

Mrs. Greenaway, wife of the navigator, was packed up and all ready to leave for her home in Alberta when news of the rescue reached Montreal. We won't try to pry into the joy of that reunion.

CHAPTER 13

We Say Good-bye to Goose

In which we review some of the more interesting happenings which took place at Goose Bay and join with the personnel in their joys and sorrows—We say good-bye to a very fine group of men and women who by their cheerful devotion to duty saved the civilian population of Canada and the United States from the threat of invasion and aerial blitz.

I CAN honestly say that I never enjoyed any six months of my life more than I did the time I spent at Goose Bay. I heard more genuine, spontaneous laughter during my period of duty up north than I had heard during the previous three years of war. Up there everyone had to make his or her own fun. If you didn't you went crazy.

The Commanding Officer was Group Captain Evans. Off duty he was Bert Evans, to most of the boys. A mere youngster in years, he had seen plenty of experience. He had the gift of leadership. Most of his officers and men would willingly have followed him to Hades if necessary. Bert liked to play when off duty and he worked equally hard when on duty. Everyone at the base knew him to be a skilful and daring pilot. He had fought in the Battle of Britain and he was respected for his ability by his officers and men.

When I arrived I was subjected to a rather stiff initiation. I was the guest of the Commanding Officer my first evening in the Mess. I believe I stood up under that ordeal pretty well. I enjoyed myself immensely. The next test was calculated to try my nerves. I was taken for a ride in Bert's jeep. Those few who have ridden with Bert Evans in his jeep will understand when I say I never before in all my life had taken such a ride. I came out with nothing worse than a few bruises. I was still able to gasp P.O. Christie's favourite expression: "Oh! My shattered nerves!" I believe I was given full marks for this performance also.

The next thing was a ride in a Bren-gun carrier with Sergt. Hawks of the New Brunswick Rangers. When he arrived at the R.C.A.F. Mess with the Bren-gun carrier after lunch one day, the Sergeant was quite openly instructed to "Give the Commander the works".

"Giving me the works" consisted of driving me at full speed into a forest of trees which surrounded the airport. Oh no, the driver doesn't stop when he comes to a tree. He just keeps on going. He smashes right into it. He hurls his carrier at it and gets really annoyed if the tree doesn't go down under the assault. If it does go down the driver grins fiendishly and proceeds to scramble over the top of the fallen tree. If the tree is obstinate and refuses to bow its head at the first crash, the driver simply backs up. He changes gear and then hurls his machine at the upstanding tree and mutters under his breath, "Down, you b——r, down!" or "Down, you S.O.B.!"

Under the combined efforts of the renewed assault and the magic of the words most trees under eight inches in diameter give up the unequal contest; they bow down and give up the ghost. Never before had I seen any machine which would absorb so much punishment.

Don't let the reader get it into his head that this was Sergeant Hawk's particular method of throwing away the taxpayer's money. By no means. Sergeant Hawk was the best driver in the outfit. His expeditions into the country surrounding the Goose Bay Airport had a definite relation to the defence of the base. He blazed the trails and made them possible for other motorized units to follow. No matter from which direction attack might have come, the Rangers knew the quickest way of getting there. The locations where they could ambush enemy troops in order to prevent them over-running the airport itself had been carefully prepared. Armed patrols, both mechanized and on foot, were always on the alert.

I have already mentioned that the country behind the airport rose in two benches, each about 40 feet higher than the other, into the foothills. I drove with Sergeant Hawk up and over those two benches right into the foothills. The N.B. Ranger drove up a crevice in the face of the bluff which had been washed out by spring rain. At times I marvelled that we didn't go over backwards. Twice I thought we must surely go over sideways. But in some strange manner we always kept going and managed to remain right side up.

There is absolutely no padding in a Bren-gun carrier. I had more than bruises when we finally came to a stop! I had lost an area of skin off a number of places.

"Now!" says the Sergeant. "Let's go into action."

He handed me a rifle and pointed to some brown paper about four hundred yards away and below us on the lower plateau.

"That paper is the enemy. They are lying down shooting at us. Can you hit them, after the ride?"

I took careful aim, held my breath, then squeezed the trigger. The piece of brown paper flipped and shivered.

"A hit, by God!" I don't think the Sergeant would have been more pleased if he had been awarded the D.C.M. He was an exceedingly fine marksman himself and he took a real pleasure out of seeing other people shoot well. During the thirty-mile ride I took that day, we saw ptarmigan (they are Arctic partridge) and rabbits, commonly known as the Arctic hare. Their fur turns snowy white and is beautiful and soft during the winter-time. We also saw signs of fox and came across a couple of small porcupine. Most of the fur-bearing animals had been almost trapped out by the natives near the coast and inlets. It is necessary to go back sixty to eighty miles from the coast in order to find game in any quantity, and to get decent trapping.

Having survived the ride I returned to the R.C.A.F. and was invited to have a Swedish bath. (I really needed a bath after tearing around in the dust of the sandy plains and crashing through the bush.) The Swedish bath was a genuine affair, run by a Swede. The rocks inside the hut were piled all over a large stove which was fired from outside. All along the back wall were benches. They rose in tiers one above the other. The temperature inside the hut was raised by throwing water on the hot rocks. This caused steam and the temperature rose higher and higher. The nearer one got to the roof the higher the temperature. The usual practice was to start on the lower bench and work one's way upwards until one reached the top. It was difficult to remain on the top bench more than a few minutes, because of the humidity and heat.

The Group Captain, the pilots of the Fighter Squadron and some American officers took their bath at the same time I did. Everyone stripped off in an outer room and then went into the sweat room naked. After everyone had soaped himself the wooden floor became slippery as

the very dickens. The temperature rose and rose until the perspiration oozed out of every pore in one's body. Then the fun started. There were buckets inside the hut, as well as a shower and cold-water tap. As if by a pre-arranged signal the young fighter pilots grabbed the buckets and filled them.

They all dumped the ice-cold water over me. That was only the beginning. The bath turned into a lovely rough-house. Everyone tried to drag everyone else under the ice-cold shower. Everyone sloshed everyone else with ice-cold water. There were yells of "Ouch!"; there were strong and emphatic adjectives used as some person about to fling a bucket of water slipped on the soapy floor and went down flat on his backside and emptied the cold water all over himself.

But this wasn't the finish. The younger officers went out of the sweat room and returned with switches. These were small bundles of twigs with the leaves still on them. The idea was to thrash one another until the body turned pink and the blood raced through one's veins. But before they divided up and paddled each other the whole bunch paddled *me*! With joyous shouts of, "It's not every day we have the opportunity to knock hell out of a Commander," they set to in earnest. It wasn't long before every square inch of my body was tingling.

I managed to escape from the torture chamber—but I intended to return. I had an idea! The floor was so slippery it was almost impossible to stay on one's feet in the sweat room. I put a pair of old rubbers on my feet and re-entered the hot room. The rubbers didn't give me perfect footing but they gave me a decided advantage over the others. It wasn't long before I had most of them down on the deck—and I gave them a double dose of their own medicine!

Those who visit Goose Bay and fail to have one of the famous Swedish baths cannot consider themselves as being fully initiated.

That night Bert Evans called the Mess to order. He said: "Gentlemen! From now on, when off duty, the Commander's name is Bill to everyone." Thus I was accepted as a fully fledged member of the R.C.A.F. Mess, Goose Bay, Labrador.

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The R.C.A.F. Sergeant who looked after the Officers' Mess and ran the bar was a teetotaller. He seemed to like his job—God only knows why! He was always cheerful, respectful, and most obliging.

He had an awful lot to put up with at times! He had to associate with ghosts. On all the shelves around the bar were bottles. Around the neck of each bottle was hung a chain, and from each chain dangled a shield-shaped, wooden token. On the token was inscribed, by F.O. Tom Cummings, the proper name and the nick-name of the "Departed Spirit". Thus they keep before the eyes of present members of the Mess the names of all past members, both living and dead, so that their memory may always remain bright and fresh.

* * * * *

The old Mess was one of the finest and happiest to which I ever belonged. The new Mess is superior to any other I have ever seen. But I like to think of the old Mess. There was the ante-room, with the piano, the bar, and the great open fireplace. Twenty couples could dance on one-half of the floor. They actually did the night we had the four W.D.s, the eight American Nursing Sisters, and the six R.C.A.F. Sisters over one Saturday night to entertain Mary Elliott, the little film starlet with the U.S.O. Section Officer Mary Stephens made up the twentieth. She was the dietitian.

At first there were no white women at Goose Bay. Then six Nursing Sisters were flown in when the R.C.A.F. hospital was completed. Next came Section Officer Mary Stephens. When the first six nurses arrived they were informed they were the only women amongst several thousand men. One of them nearly fainted, while another shouted "Oh Lord,—this surely must be paradise!"

In the summer of 1943 four R.A.F. W.D. Coding Officers put in their appearance and they were made truly welcome. Next came eight American Nursing Sisters. I was the oldest member of the Mess and as I realized it was no use trying to compete with the handsome young Canadian and U.S. Officers I persuaded Miss Bergen, one of the U.S. Nurses, to allow me to adopt her as my daughter. I hope she still remembers her "Pappy".

All these girls were a credit to the services they represented and they were a credit to Canadian and American womanhood. They played no favourites. They were about as jolly and carefree a bunch of girls one could ever wish to meet anywhere. All of them, who were able, attended the weekly "Rat Race" held on a Saturday night in the R.C.A.F. Mess. They danced the whole night through—or at least until everyone who wanted to dance had had one or more.

When the dancing was over the easy chairs would be drawn up in front of the open fire and everyone would sit around and sing the old songs. Some nights, P.O. "Russ" Taylor would play the piano like a man possessed. His moods and tunes would change according to the drinks he imbibed.

Anything a little out of the ordinary was excuse for a mild celebration. One Saturday night "Baldy" came into the Mess wearing his Number One uniform. He had had the orderly clean and press it so you could have cut your throat with the crease in the trousers. His shoes

were polished so that they reflected like a mirror. He had on a new tie, and his short stiff hair stood up neat and trim like a terrier's when on exhibition. He couldn't have looked smarter if he had been attending his own wedding. Up in Goose we wore pretty much what we felt like, providing it was comfortable and serviceable. Seeing "Baldy" come into the Mess all dressed up gave everyone a shock.

"What's the idea, 'Baldy'? Where do you think you're going tonight?" Chris Christie threw at him as he entered.

"Baldy" held up his hand dramatically. "O.K., fellows! Just pipe down. This is Saturday night. It's my night for romance—lay off, will you, and give me a chance!"

Then there was the elderly officer who put his arm around Ethel and said dramatically, "Ethel! I feel so lonely! You don't *know* how lonely . . . You don't realize how I miss my poor old mother—I think you better take me on the veranda!" His originality won her consent.

Section Officer Mary Stephens took more kidding without ever once getting sore, than any girl I ever met. To sum up the whole situation, the Nursing Sisters, the W.D.s and Mary were like nineteen sisters amongst a great big family of unruly boys.

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Not very often but occasionally a few of the officers would get the urge for a game of poker. The games in the Mess were never allowed to go to high stakes. Strange as it may seem, Air Force knock rummy and cribbage were the most popular card games. It was almost impossible to get up a four for bridge.

"Chappy", otherwise known as Mr. Chapman, was the Y.M.C.A. representative at Goose, and he was ably assisted by young Brown from Meaford, Ontario. Brown

was one of the famous "Brown Twins" who were such outstanding athletes a few years ago. They looked after sports, entertainments, and movies, etc. They did a good job. Both of them and Padre Anderson, the Church of England Chaplain, were always out with the men, leading them in competitive sports. Padre McGuire, the Roman Catholic Chaplain, was a very hard-working man. He became very popular with both officers and men.

I'll never forget the Field Day at which officers and men from all units attached to Goose Bay competed. Young Brown didn't enter any of the events. He was kept busy assisting in running them off. After each event had been decided and the winner announced, Brown gave an exhibition of how that particular sport should be done. He was so far superior to every other competitor it wouldn't have been even funny had he entered officially.

Brownie, as he was generally called, was as modest as he was capable. It was a great pleasure and a welcome surprise to meet him again 'way up in Goose Bay. The last time I had seen the Brown Twins was back in 1936 when I drove my family to Meaford, to enable my eldest son Bill to compete against the Brown Brothers at a Sports Day held in that town. These brothers were about the best all-round athletes the University of Toronto produced in many years. One was entered in the Olympic Games and the other visited Australia to compete in the British Empire Games. Both boys are just as good sports off the field as they are when competing.

* * * * *

When time and duty permitted there was all kinds of out-door sport. During the winter there was ice hockey, skating, bob-sledding, skiing, snow-shoeing, and driving dog-teams. There was fair hunting for ptarmigan, rabbits and other small game near the base. Fishing through the

ice always provided good sport. Those who braved the icy winds caught plenty of trout and smelts.

Both spring and fall there was good duck-hunting, and if the time was available the natives would take a party out after wild geese. In the summer, Labrador is a fisherman's heaven. Sea trout are plentiful and grow up to seven pounds. I fished off Caravalla Point at the entrance to Lake Melville on three occasions, and on each the catch numbered about forty fish, which averaged four and a quarter pounds each. One morning, before breakfast I landed eighteen trout which weighed eighty-seven pounds, with rod and line. Speckled trout are plentiful in the lakes. Salmon are also plentiful but they don't seem interested in artificial flies. At least, we couldn't tempt them in the lake or at the mouths of the various rivers. They evidently go far up the rivers to spawn and they may take a fly after they have been in fresh water for a time.

Last, but by no means least, there were the wonderful motor-boat trips we had on Lake Melville and Goose Bay—"Banjo's ringing . . . nurses singing, all the live-long day." Yes! The trips from Goose Bay to North West River will long live in my memory.

The Padres saw to it that the men had their picnic and motor trips every week. I can honestly say that if a person got bored or "bushed", as they called it, up in Goose Bay, it was because he was too lazy or indifferent to take an interest in the many activities which were always going on.

* * * * *

Amusing things happened from time to time. There were cases in which men really did become "bushed". Some of the worst cases had to be flown out under escort.

It was said that if you saw a man speaking to a tree, that didn't necessarily indicate he was "bushed". Even

if he claimed the tree was talking to him—well, he might still not be “bushed”. But if he claimed he knew what the tree was saying to him—then he was “bushed”.

I was in the Mess about 1700 one evening. F.L. ———, one of the Medical Officers, came in. He said to the bar-sergeant, “Give me a double Scotch, quick, Bert! I think I’m in a bad way!”

“What’s the matter, Doc?” I asked sympathetically.

“Commander, do you know I think I’m bushed!”

“Nonsense, Doc! You’re all right,” I assured him.

“All right be damned! I had a fellow come in to see me about an hour ago. I asked him what the matter was. He replied that there was nothing the matter except some butterflies. He held out his arm and started to brush them off.

“I told him to sit down. I talked to him and tried to persuade him that there were no butterflies on his arm. The fool argued that there were. He claimed it wasn’t him that was crazy it was me, because I couldn’t see the butterflies when they were flitting about all over the place.

“Do you know, Commander, I found myself saying, ‘Well, you don’t have to brush the damn things onto me, do you?’ ”

Then there was the case of the Finn carpenter. He was boarding in the side of a building. As we passed by we noticed he was throwing away about half the nails he picked out of his apron. We called the foreman over.

“Why is that man throwing away so many nails? It seems an awful waste when they are so hard to obtain.”

We walked over nearer to the Finn. If he pulled the nail out of his apron pocket with the head towards him he nailed it into the board. If the nail had the point towards him he threw it over his shoulder.

The foreman addressed the carpenter, "Why are you throwing away all those nails?"

The carpenter had reached the stage of being "bushed" when he didn't talk any more. He just went right on with his work. If the nail's point was towards the building he drove the nail; if it wasn't he threw it away and reached for another.

Finally the foreman became exasperated. "Don't throw away those nails with the points pointing from the building. Save 'em—they'll do for the other side!"

The man went right on working, but if the point happened to be the wrong way he put it back into the apron pocket and selected another. He was "bushed", without any question of doubt.

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One of the happiest trips I enjoyed was a second trip to North West River. We had been informed that the natives were holding a Red Cross Day. The party from the airport arrived about 1400. One of the Air Force boats tried to take a short cut and got stranded on a sand bar. The navigation inward from Lake Melville to the airport is decidedly treacherous. I have explained how the land falls away from the mountains in benches about 40 feet below each other. These benches continue right out into the bay. The first bench beyond the shore-line is just under water. It is doubtful if more than four feet of water could be found anywhere within a half mile of shore except where channels run out into deep water. In some places the bench will run out fully a mile from shore. Where the bench stops there is a sheer drop of at least thirty feet and sometimes forty feet in the depth of water.

In order to bring ocean-going ships right up to the air base, all the inner bays had to be surveyed with echo-

sounding machines. Those who piloted the big ships into Goose Bay and Terrington Basin know the channels and they altered course when certain well-defined landmarks came onto certain bearings. Buoys were also placed to mark the channels at the various narrows. The danger to small boats was due to the fact that inexperienced men couldn't realize that the water could be so shallow so far off shore. They would try to cut corners—and they would invariably run aground. Then they would try and push the boat off into deep water. Often they would stumble into numerous deep channels that were possibly only twenty feet wide. These channels ran in every direction, like the lines in the palm of one's hand. I consider we were lucky to have as few drowning accidents as we did experience during the construction of the base. Several soldiers lost their lives, and Charlie Chalk, the native pilot, lost one of his sons. It was nearly a double tragedy. The other boy was reached just before he went under for the third time.

The afternoon at North West River was devoted to sports, shooting matches, and a game the natives played with a pound of stiff bread-dough. They heaved the dough at a round hole cut in a board. If they put it through the hole they scored one point. Apparently every man at the Mission entered. Each man paid an entrance fee, and everyone had an even number of throws. The man with the most points won a basket of groceries.

The younger boys, and some of the girls, were more interested in target shooting with .22 rifles. They were exceedingly good shots. This is hardly to be wondered at when it is considered that most of the inhabitants of Labrador rely in ordinary times upon what they shoot or catch, for their living. They stood in respectful awe when some of us showed them fancy shooting with both rifle and revolver. It was quite evident that they measured

a man and respected him for his ability and prowess with arms and as a hunter.

After I had finished shooting, a number of natives wanted to buy both my revolver and my rifle. It was really amusing. They had such absolute confidence in their own skill and ability as marksmen that they honestly believed that it could only be superiority in guns that beat them.

The pilots of the Fighter Squadron, while out on their routine patrol, came over North West River and gave the natives as fine an exhibition of aerial acrobatics and stunt flying as it has ever been my pleasure to witness. These young fighter pilots did everything except cut the grass for the inhabitants of the Grenfell Mission and Hudson's Bay Post!

The American personnel cornered the market for native-made goods. They paid any price for those things they wanted. Mukluks rose from \$2 to \$6 per pair; mitts from \$1.50 to \$5; deer skins from \$2 to \$10; and so on all the way down the line.

The best illustration of inflation I have witnessed during this war was at the Indian Camp across the river from the Grenfell Mission. The Montagnais Tribe visit North West River every spring. They sell their catch of fur and buy more hunting and trapping equipment and provisions. When these Indians first arrived in 1943 they welcomed the visiting airmen and allowed them to take photographs of members of the tribe. Once the U.S. troops began to throw their money around, the Indians caught on quickly. The oldest woman, who was Queen of the tribe, ruled the others with a rod of iron. She was a wrinkled old squaw, but there was something about the old lady that made her look proud and dignified. At first she used to take a pleasure in being photographed, but after the Americans became over-enthusiastic and

raised the ante for everything they wanted, the old lady surprised them one day by refusing to be photographed unless they paid her \$5. They paid the \$5 and thought it a great joke!

That night a Native Dance was held in the Community Hall. It has to be seen to be believed! I never expected to see so much stamina and endurance. To the tune of an old fiddle and a mouth-organ the older people danced from 1900 onwards. The dances are a variety of square dance. I seemed to recognize some of the numbers as the same as I had seen at Old Country Dances in Lancashire. It is many years since I witnessed the dances and heard the tunes but I am satisfied that they are very, very similar.

As the older people tired the younger ones took their place. It was quite evident to me that the native youths respect parental authority and mature years. My impression of the natives is that they are gentlemen by nature.

One of the strange things I noticed was that the men would enter for the dance by standing on the floor, four men to each square. The girls then picked out the man with whom they wished to dance and paired him on the floor. They then stood waiting until all the rest of the men had been claimed by a girl. If there was an indication that the dance was going to be delayed the men without partners would withdraw and others would take their place. There was no ill feeling or resentment shown by either parties.

The men did a step-dance all the time between numbers, keeping in step with the music and never tiring. It seemed to me that the men tried to impress the females with their qualities of endurance and competed with each other to show who could put the greatest amount of energy into his dancing. The other officers with me agreed

they would hate to have to do a hard day's work after dancing all night as the natives danced.

I tried to obtain some ivory carvings. Some Northern tribes make the most magnificent carvings—I have seen a dog-team, sled, and driver carved out of one walrus tusk. The proportions and shapes were perfect. It must have taken the workmen at least two winters to finish. They have only the crudest of knives and tools. Al Cheeseman bought some very fine examples of native art from tribes when he flew in with provisions and medical supplies on some of his "mercy" flights, and he bought them at a very reasonable price. Once Uncle Sam's boys arrived they certainly set the most perfect example of the law of supply and demand. The prices sky-rocketed one thousand per cent, and they contracted natives to work for them for a year ahead.

It is surprising how quickly people learn. As far as I know there was no prostitution up North before the war. One reason for this is the fact that, generally speaking, the men out-number the women three to one. This is a good thing, inasmuch as it requires two to three hunters to supply sufficient food for one family. If the native men did not share the affections of their women-folk there would be jealousy and possibly murder. This would lead to feuds and ultimately to the extinction of the various tribes. By sharing the favour of the women-folk and by looking upon the sex act as a natural appetite which should be satisfied whenever opportunity presented itself, there were no quarrels or jealousy over these matters and therefore no eternal triangles.

But after the white men arrived in great numbers things changed rapidly. Competition crept in. Money changed hands, and before the authorities realized it to be a fact, one Indian at least had established himself in business and was proprietor of a house of ill-fame. Inci-

dentially, judging from accounts, he would have been the first Indian millionaire in Labrador had F.O. Alexander of the R.C.A.F. security police not nipped his activities in the bud. The Old Buck concerned had set up his tent, and his stock-in-trade were a couple of young Indian girls. One was about twenty, the other was small, immature and quite young. With true Indian logic the Old Buck charged patrons a higher price for the favours of the older, more experienced girl than he did for the younger and less experienced one. The fact that a well-worn path came into being in the woods, and that men went fishing where there were no fish, and that others went hunting where there was no game, finally created suspicion. One day the M.O. reported that several men had gone to sick-bay with V.D. Immediate investigation disclosed how the Oldest Profession had found its way to Goose Bay.

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When the native workmen brought their families along to Goose it became necessary for the authorities to establish a native village. This was put out of bounds to the Service personnel, but the village was not out of bounds to the civilian personnel working on construction. At first it was rather amusing. I am told the Army provided a guard to escort twelve of the native girls back and forth from the McNamara laundry to the village. The girls objected to this procedure and ultimately it was discontinued.

There seems to have been very little trouble as the result of the labourers mixing with the native girls. As a matter of fact, I only know of one case where a girl laid a complaint. It was due to the fact that an employee of the Construction Company obtained liquor from the crew of one of the Merchant ships unloading at Goose. He got rather drunk. While on his way up the hill from

the dock to the airport he met one of the native girls. As a result of what happened, she reported she had been raped.

(It is a well-known fact that the natives use words of which they don't really understand the true meaning. Fortunately for the man concerned the officials in charge of the investigation knew of this peculiarity.)

The girl told her story of how she had met this man, how he had taken her into the bushes, and how he had been *wonderfully fierce during his attack*. Further interrogation showed that the girl was not so much concerned about what had happened to her as she was about the lack of preliminaries. It was the fact that the man concerned had taken everything for granted which seemed to annoy her most.

The man claimed he had intended no harm. He produced several witnesses who were prepared to swear that they had all enjoyed the favours of the young woman. They claimed she had never raised the slightest objections. The investigators summed up the evidence and came to the conclusion that it wasn't exactly a case of rape—it was more a case of seduction without salesmanship.

As might be expected, there were bound to be results from the association between natives and strangers. It is to the everlasting credit of the Medical Officers and Nursing Sisters attached to the R.C.A.F. hospital at Goose Bay, that they took these girls in and treated them as human beings. I saw young mothers receiving treatment that couldn't have been better had they been favourite children of a royal family. The way in which the Nursing Sisters treated their less fortunate sisters was one of the most edifying sights I have ever seen. I saw Sister —— pick up one little morsel of humanity and take it in to its mother to be fed. She nuzzled the little wrinkled mite

to her cheek. It was as red as an over-ripe strawberry and she addressed it: "You poor little darling!"

I said, "Do you really care for that little papoose?"

"Care for it? Sure I care for it—it's just a little darling. You know, Commander, but for the way the Hand of Fate shuffles the cards, I might have been in her shoes and she might have been in mine." This particular Nursing Sister has since married. Her husband is most certainly a very lucky man. There is hope for the world as long as such women live and reproduce their kind.

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Up North there was such a refreshing absence of "red tape". No problem ever presented itself that couldn't be solved in an hour. There was complete harmony amongst the heads of departments, and a sincere desire to co-operate. The attitude was: "Rules are made to guide, not to govern."

The Medical Officers did a great job, and they took an unmerciful amount of kidding. The majority of people up at Goose were disgustingly healthy. The poor medical staff were kept busy trying to find patients. It was claimed that Doc Fraser would amputate a toe with an ingrowing toe-nail just to keep in practice.

Once I heard one young pilot say, "I've got a gosh-awful pain in my tummy."

"Better not let the Doc hear you say that or you'll be on the operating table in five minutes having your appendix removed," a brother officer informed him.

"But I've had my appendix out already."

"No dice! I don't think that would stand in the Doc's way if he saw a chance for an operation."

All this was pure kidding. Doc Fraser is reputed to have performed some marvellous operations while at Goose Bay. I was actually able to provide him with a patient. A seaman, named Murphy, on one of the escort-

ing corvettes, had an attack of acute appendicitis. He was very ill and in a bad way when the ship arrived in Hamilton Inlet. Al Cheeseman flew down in his Norseman. He flew the man back on a stretcher. Doc Fraser operated and saved his life.

A native woman was reported in heavy labour over a long period. One of the doctors raced off to see what could be done about it. He found she was suffering from a deformed pelvis. Only a Caesarian operation could save her life and that operation had to be performed immediately. I heard afterwards that Doc Fraser completed that operation in fifteen minutes. It usually takes from forty-five minutes to an hour. The woman and her baby lived.

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I like to think back on the nights in the Mess when we played cards or sang songs. I can still remember how Diamond Jim Millick, Al Cheeseman, Doc Bourgeois and myself tried to "knock" each other at rummy. I can still see the other table where the three medicos played against a lone airman—poor airman! In fun we used to accuse the M.O.s of pooling their winnings and losses. There were hectic nights when "Russ" Taylor wanted "Just a little excitement, gentlemen"—and then he'd rattle the bones. And there was the night when Andy C—responded to the order and reported at the Mess and came in *a la natural*. The fire extinguisher which Mary Stephens used for a garden hose came in useful that night!

And there was the night when the boys played poker and developed a great hunger upon a terrible thirst. Poor Mary lost her tenderloin steaks. Through no fault of her own, Mary Stephens had been obliged to serve mutton pretty often over a considerable period of time. It was old, fat mutton. Mary tried to disguise it as best she could. It would be fried one meal, stewed the next, roast

the next, curried the next, and hashed the next. It was even known to appear disguised as head cheese. Just to tease Mary the boys were unkind enough to stand up when she entered the Mess and say, "Baa . . . Baa . . . B-a-a-aaaa." Mary would smile sweetly and sit down and eat—mutton!

This particular night that the boys played poker, Mary had placed some very fine tenderloins in the "frig" for next day's lunch. (It is reported that in order to give the officers a change she had *borrowed* the steaks from the Construction Company's commissariat.) No matter how they were obtained, the long thick tenderloins caught the eye of a midnight marauder as he raided the ice-box for a "Dagwood" that particular night.

All those playing poker had done their level best to quench their thirst; unfortunately, in so doing they had aggravated their hunger. No sooner were the tenderloins discovered than the game stopped. Before anyone could say "Jack Robinson" the players were organized. One was peeling onions, another was cutting bread, another was toasting it, another was buttering the toast, another was making coffee — and, shameful to relate, I was appointed head cook. "Yes, Mary, I dood it. I cooked the steaks and I smothered them with onions, and the boys ate them between thick slices of buttered toast."

It was never intended that we eat them all. The trouble was that the wind happened to be in the wrong direction that night, and the smell of the juicy steaks and onions woke up the Dental Officer attached to the base. He visited the Mess. After sampling one himself he thought it only fair that everyone should be treated alike. He organized himself into a one-man delivery service and awakened all the sleeping airmen over in the officers' block. In order to make what were left go around I had

to cut the steaks thinner and smack each one solidly with the flat of the butcher's knife.

"Those steaks were awfully nice, Mary! I think we enjoyed them better that way than if served for lunch next day. I also remember, Mary, that when some officer was unkind enough to remark at lunch next day, 'What! Mutton again?' you replied, 'Ba-a-aaaa.' Then we all recited, 'Mary had a little lamb.'"

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I often chuckle when I think of Lord Haw-Haw's radio broadcast in which he predicted the Axis Powers would starve into submission the garrison at Goose Bay. If only he could have seen those young airmen tucking into onions, tomatoes, cucumbers, cold meats, cheese, jam and marmalade around about midnight every night! Even Dagwood could have spent a profitable evening learning new combinations and sizes.

Then the happy trips to Goose River Lumber Camps will long remain green in my memory. I don't remember the name of the head cook, but I well remember the night he tried to satisfy one pilot's appetite, and quit horrified, after serving him three T-bone steaks, together with all the "fixings".

Then there was the time we put on the dinner for Bill Durrell and purloined most of the food that appeared on the table from his own refrigerators. How Bill did laugh when informed of the fact!

And then there were the parties at Bill's shack, and Clayton, Bill's "Man Friday" who looked after everyone so well. It took so little to make one happy up north when free from red tape and the hustle and bustle of so-called civilization.

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I mustn't forget to mention the trips from Goose Bay to Rigolet aboard the *Laurentian* and the kind hospitality

of Captain Stevens and his officers. There are few men going to sea today with the record of his Chief Steward Mr. Cooper. As I recall the facts, Mr. Cooper had sailed as steward with Captain Stevens' father before the present Captain Stevens was born. And recalling Mr. Cooper, I think of the cabin boy, Frank, who was so badly bitten by mosquitoes that his arms swelled to three times their normal size.

Those were great fishing trips we enjoyed while the *Laurentian* was unloading at Rigolet. There are not many places where four fishermen such as Father McQuire, Mr. Chapman, Diamond Jim, and myself could catch enough trout in four hours to supply over one hundred meals.

On another occasion there was the moonlight cruise which so nearly ended in disaster. The motor boat caught fire and thirteen airmen had to take to the water. The only passengers who were dry were the women who were landed in a little skiff. It took more than two hours before the last of the airmen struggled ashore. Some of them were cold and in an exhausted condition. There was plenty of bracken and driftwood, but a heavy dew had saturated everything so that it wouldn't burn easily. One of the airmen, trying to start the fire, exclaimed, "Ho! What wouldn't I give if only I had something dry to start this fire! Once it caught hold it would burn."

An Angel of Mercy heard his prayer, and disappearing into the bushes she came back and blushing handed him her panties. "These are rayon—I think they will burn," she told him. And they did burn!

The fire caught hold. The flames leaped up and gave warmth. Fresh fuel was piled on higher and higher, until finally the look-outs at the base saw the fire and gave the alarm.

Al Cheeseman went out with the rescue craft and brought everyone back to base. Thanks to the presence of mind of a certain little lady, and her spirit of self-sacrifice, none of her companions were any the worse for their ducking.

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A tribute is due to the officers and men of the Merchant Navy who manned the ships which carried the goods, supplies, and equipment into Goose Bay and up into the Arctic—men like Captain Le Blanc, Captain Edwards, and Captain Williams, and other tanker Captains. Nor can we forget the Captain of the *Fleurus* and the *Lady Rodney*, who handled the troops and most of the personnel.

The voyages were not so very long, but there are few other places in the world where the tides and currents are more treacherous, the storms wilder, the blizzards and fog thicker, and the ice conditions so bad. Then again, the coast is so poorly lighted. You men of the Merchant Navy did a marvellous job. Your duties were tiring and dangerous. The manner in which the ships were turned around was most creditable, and the appreciation you Master Mariners voiced for the assistance and protection you were afforded by the escorting vessels of the Royal Canadian Navy is ample reward for their efforts.

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I cannot conclude without reference to the Jitterbugs, Pilot Officers Christie and Postavitch, and the American nurses who were their partners. One will have to travel many a long day before he can find more simple happiness and care-free laughter than we enjoyed sitting around the open fire in the R.C.A.F. Mess. It was just like one big happy family.

I can still hear "Russ" Taylor hammering out his favourite songs, and tunes. "The Little Old Ace in the Hole", "Way up in Goose Bay", "The North Atlantic Squadron", "I've Got Six-pence", and all the old favourites.

Bright in my memory is the farewell dinner the officers of the U.S.A.A.F. gave to their Commanding Officer, Colonel A. D. Smith, upon the occasion of his well-deserved promotion and draft to another command within the Arctic Zone. I think it is safe to say that never before was such a dinner served north of latitude 55. He was a very fine officer and a charming gentleman, even if he was the best "crap-shooter" in Goose Bay.

There wasn't an officer or man at Goose Bay who wasn't sorry to see Group Captain Bert Evans drafted away. I was proud to be at the farewell dinner given in his honour by the officers under his command. I hope his little daughter still has her Goose Bay Piggy Bank—and I hope she will never have to use the Victory Bonds that were hidden in Piggy's tummy to start her education, even if her Daddy is a "Bad Old Man". I helped Group Captain Evans pack up his belongings the day he flew out from Goose Bay, and I can assure those who had grown to like and admire him that he was very deeply moved when the time came to drive over to the plane.

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Neither must we forget the officers and men of the Canadian Army who supplied the defence force and manned the ack-ack guns. Perhaps they, more than anyone else, had the most tedious and nerve-racking tasks to perform. They had to be always on the alert and yet nothing ever happened. That kind of warfare tests a man right down deep.

The new huts were an improvement upon the original sand-pits covered with canvas and later covered with

snow. I wish to thank the officers and men of all three services who worked so hard whenever ships arrived to be unloaded. There was never one single occasion when the ships were held over, they invariably sailed before schedule. That fact is due to the wonderful manner in which the men of the armed services work in co-operation with the men hired by the contractors.

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We must not forget those who sleep in the little grave-yard attached to the airport. They died that we might live. I couldn't help but think how peaceful and quiet was their last earthly resting-place. The sand so dry . . . the earth so cold. It is strange how the hand of Fate reaches out and takes some and leaves others. I wish to express my sympathy to the widows and children of those airmen we buried up North. They were doing just as important a duty as if they had been fighting in Europe. They were full of life and daring. I used to wait to hear them diving down on the anti-aircraft gun positions every morning as they exercised the defence force. The roar of their engines was our alarm clock.

The death of W.O.1 Morgan was a sad blow to his companions in the Fighter Squadron. If it is any comfort to his widow and her child, he sleeps in company with a few very brave young airmen.

It seemed unbelievable that we should see him soaring strong like an eagle one moment and diving like a hawk the next; then, suddenly he failed to pull out of his dive and went on to his death.

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But all these things are necessary before the gigantic task of building the greatest airport and aerial defence project the world has ever known, could be completed. "Men must work and women must weep" is an old saying—and it is often true. I only wish those who have had

to experience sorrow because of the Goose Bay project could have had the satisfaction of seeing it after completion. What a sight to the eyes, what music to the ears—hundreds, yes, thousands of planes soaring on their way to battle for freedom! Had Hitler been required to sleep one week at Goose Bay Airport, he would have gone stark, raving mad. Every hour, night and day, he would have heard the drone of planes coming in or going out. They roared a continuous challenge. They predicted an endless stream of death from the air. They guaranteed the Allies superiority in the air everywhere throughout the entire world. He had asked for global war. He has got what he asked for.

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One other very edifying experience I had at Goose Bay was during the visit of Brigadier the Most Reverend C. L. Nellegan, the Roman Catholic Chaplain General of the Canadian Forces.

A church parade was organized on this occasion and over a thousand men turned out: the Archbishop, attended by Group Captain B. Evans; Colonel Montague; Colonel Roach; and myself as representing the Royal Canadian Navy, took the salute just before the parade reached the Knights of Columbus Hall.

High Mass was celebrated and the Archbishop preached the sermon. The majority of the men present received Holy Communion and the Chaplain General said during his address that the experience he had while visiting the northern airport was the most consoling of his priestly career.

"It was most certainly a wonderful turn out, and a mass profession of faith in the mercy and goodness of Almighty God." Men from the R.C.A.F., others from the Military Defence Force; representatives from the U.S.A.A.F., a small contingent from the merchant ships

in port at the time, Nursing Sisters and several hundred employees from the Construction Company attended the service and the big hall was crowded to the doors.

The Padres of all denominations remarked that the men turned to religion for comfort and consolation and spiritual help while cut off from civilization. It was very edifying to see the real friendship and close co-operation which existed amongst the ministers of different denominations. I heard several officers remark how strange it is that both ministers and members of all denominations can get along in perfect peace and harmony while on active service, and yet it seems to be impossible to obtain the same spirit of true Christian charity and understanding in civilization.

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There were so many other interesting events which took place at Goose Bay that it is almost impossible to remember them all. One event that made history was the arrival and departure of the first glider to cross the Atlantic from west to east. This glider was piloted by Squadron Leader Seys. Everyone was on deck when it released its tow-line and came sailing in, graceful as a bird, making a perfect landing on the 6,000 foot runway. For security reasons there is not very much one can say at this stage of the war, but the flight was successful and Seys landed in Scotland safely with a cargo of concentrates, chemicals, and other highly valuable war materials.

Under this note I see the names of Miss Harrison and Mrs. Love. They were two of the first women pilots I met in Goose Bay, flying bombers across to Europe. They, together with about twenty other women, had been ferrying planes from factory to base for the R.A.F. in England. Those whose homes were in America had been granted leave in Canada and the U.S.A. Instead of going back as passengers, they flew back as pilots or as co-

pilots. These women have done a marvellous job in this war. They are amongst the most versatile pilots in the world, for they can step into the cock-pit of almost any make or type of plane and fly them to their destination.

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It is no use denying the fact that most men grow lonely for female companionship up north. The story is told of one famous bush pilot who was granted leave after six months. He flew from Goose to Dorval. He had to take the train from Montreal to his destination. Compared with flying, the train seemed to crawl along. He just about wore out the seat of his pants wriggling and squirming with impatience while the train took two days to cover the distance he could have flown in his plane in five hours. When the train reached the next divisional point to his destination at 4.0 P.M. he sent a telegram to his wife. It read "Arriving ten-thirty move over."

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There are many stories told about the bush pilots. True or otherwise they illustrate the type of men they really are. Most of them are well on into middle age. Al Cheeseman has turned forty-four, Duke Scheiller was about the same age when he was killed. Incidentally, Al and Duke married sisters. I had the pleasure of meeting Mrs. Cheeseman on two occasions, and I would say they are a pair well matched. Their son, who is about seventeen, is a "chip off the old block". There can be no mistaking that fact. He is just crazy about flying and hopes to join the R.C.A.F. this year.

One of the best stories I heard concerns a pilot who is now flying for the Ferry Command. I asked him how he came to switch from the 164th Squadron to the Ferry Command. This is his explanation.

"You remember the time we met in Gander? I flew you to Montreal," he said.

"Sure! The time we had Ethel in the plane."

"That's the trip. Well, it was shortly after that. I was given leave. As a matter of fact, I would have started on my leave in half an hour if what happened hadn't happened."

"What did happen?" I urged. Tommy had a drink in his hand and kept interrupting his story to quench his unquenchable thirst.

"Knowing I was going on leave I thought I would get a head start," he informed me with a grin. "I therefore proceeded to relax and 'tied one on'. I was stretched out on a chesterfield in the Mess. My tunic was open, my feet up in the air. I had a cigar in one fist and a tumbler half full of Scotch in the other. Oh boy! Was I ever feeling good!

"Suddenly, I saw all the other Joes in the Mess jump to their feet and come to attention. I didn't know what all the fuss was about and I didn't particularly care.

"I looked up and saw a Joe looking down at me.

"'Do you know who I am?' " he asked.

"No, I don't," I told him.

"'I'm Air Vice-Marshal so-and-so,' " he informed me.

"I didn't bother to get up—as a matter of fact the safest position for me at that moment was lying down. But I was feeling good; I wanted to be happy with all the world, so I said cheerily, 'Glad to know you, sir! Air Vice-Marshal sounds like a hell of a good job to me. I'd hang onto it if I were you . . . even if there isn't much chance for promotion.' "

"And that was that," I suggested.

"Yes! That was that . . . However, I'm having one hell of a lot of fun flying crates over to Africa. I'm just waiting for another trip. Better come home and have dinner with me, Commander. Be a good scout—help a fellow out! I'm in the dog-house for the moment," he

confided. "You see, I got some personal effects mixed up amongst some souvenirs I brought home for the Missis from Egypt. Trouble was they weren't personal effects a *man* could wear!"

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Jack Hone was flying from Goose to Chimo. Nobody seems to know why but during the flight one of the tires had a "blow-out". It burst with a terrific B-a-n-g!

One of his crew suggested they turn back to Goose. Jack said, "Hell, no! I'm keeping right on. We've got to land somewhere—just where doesn't seem to matter a hell of a lot. It might as well be at our original destination." He made a safe landing on one wheel.

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Two bush pilots met in the Mess in Goose Bay one evening.

"Do you remember the time we were both in hospital together?" one asked the other.

"Sure do!" the other replied laughing heartily.

"The staff never did find out where we hid the gin or who kept us supplied," Number One reminisced.

This started the ball rolling. These two particular men were employed as commercial pilots before the war. They happened to get involved in crashes which landed them both in the same hospital. One of them had to make a forced landing in thick fog because his gas had given out. He made the landing field but his plane turned completely over while landing. It is claimed that the plane travelled one hundred yards on its back before coming to a stop. It was wintertime and the temperature was well below zero. The pilot wasn't dead so they carried him into the hospital. He was badly cut about the face and head. One ear was missing and a few bones were broken. After he had been fixed up he was placed in a room with the other pilot as his companion. According

to their story it was fully half an hour after Al had been made comfortable that a doctor walked in with a small dish and some instruments. In the dish was Al's missing ear. Al swears by all that's holy that the ear he is wearing today is the ear that doctor sewed on that night.

(I wish I could describe the scene in the Mess when these bush pilots got to spinning yarns. I have seen young fighter pilots literally roll about in agonies of laughter at the droll manner in which the Old-timers told their yarns.)

According to Al, and his companion confirmed the fact, the salvage crew found his ear while they were cleaning up the wreckage of the plane.

From what I heard that night the hospital authorities were at their wits end to know how to handle the two bush pilots. In some mysterious manner they seemed able to obtain enough liquor to keep them continuously happy. Search as they might the hospital officials couldn't discover where the liquor was hidden or from whence it came. According to the two bush pilots lady visitors brought the gin into the hospital in their hand-bags. They poured the contents of the gin bottles into the flower vases and then sprayed the flowers with some special perfume they had obtained from an undertaker. Al claims the stems of the flowers didn't hurt the flavour any!

While in Port Arthur I met Captain Oakes, another famous bush pilot who at one time had flown for years with Al Cheeseman. Cap. told me about the time Duke Scheiller flew so low down the main street of Fort William that the people in the hotel missed seeing the plane when they poked their heads out of their windows *because they looked up instead of down*. There are plenty of people in Fort William who are prepared to swear that he flew below the level of the fourth storey.

* * * * *

I knew another Ferry Command pilot who was with the R.C.A.F. before he joined the Ferry Command. He retired gracefully from the R.C.A.F. after shooting up about a dozen dogs at a certain base because their howling wouldn't let him sleep at night. This same pilot was forced down in the Arctic and spent ten days there before he was rescued. When the rescue plane landed to fly him out he is alleged to have remarked, "Hell's bells! There's always somebody has to spoil a good thing . . . The hunting and fishing is simply grand. I've never enjoyed a holiday so much in all my life."

I met the same pilot again in Montreal. "Tex" is what all his friends call him. Last time I met him he was just returning from leave. He had been south to visit his folks. On the journey north in the train a porter had made himself rather objectionable. He refused to bring them ice—he refused to do anything they requested. He was independent as the very devil. The climax came when the porter opened the door of the compartment in which Tex and a friend were entertaining two girls. The porter informed them that the young ladies would have to leave the compartment.

Tex patiently pointed out that as there were two couples in one small compartment even the most suspiciously-minded person could hardly accuse them of having any ulterior motives. The porter, however, was insistent that the young ladies leave.

"O.K. I say they stay," Tex retorted angrily. "Now let's see what you are going to do about it."

The porter became abusive and Tex hit him. He hit him so often and so fast that according to the story as I heard it the porter was taken off the train and put into hospital at the next stop.

"After we'd got rid of the porter," Tex informed me, "the conductor told me that he would have to wire ahead and hand me over to the police upon arrival."

"When we arrived I waited around and finally I asked the conductor why the police hadn't shown up."

"Police? What I said was that I *ought* to wire ahead and hand you over to the police upon arrival. Mister, I still think I ought to. You should have killed that so-and-so when you were at it . . . He's been asking for trouble so long we were wondering when he would get what was coming to him."

* * * * *

Be these stories fiction or fact, there is one thing certain, I know that most of them are based on actual happenings. Having met the principals in person, I can believe every word they told me. These bush pilots are in a class alone. They are skilful and they are daring, but I don't believe they take foolish or unnecessary risks. I have heard Al Cheeseman say seriously that he will take a 50-50 chance if the urgency of the occasion demands. These men are wise. There is little if anything about flying they haven't learned as the result of their long experience. They sum up the pros and cons and then they make their decision. Once they make up their mind they never change it. They have the initiative, the courage, and the spirit of determination necessary to use their knowledge to the fullest advantage. They are one and all "real he-men". They are "tops" when on the job, and they are more fun than a cage full of monkeys when off the job. They are individualists. They know their job and they can't stand red tape or restraint. They are not the type that will fit in harmoniously at all times, and be happy under Service discipline. Theirs is too much of the eagle spirit. They want to soar . . . They want to fly . . . They want to be unfettered. They want

to do their own job in their own way. They are willing to risk their necks but they want to decide for themselves how they shall do the job in hand. They have their faults—show me the man who hasn't—but their happy-go-lucky dispositions, their fearlessness, their self-confidence, their loyalty, and their unselfish devotion to duty make them all men of which the Dominion of Canada and the U.S.A. may well feel proud.

* * * * *

The day after Group Captain Henchette Taylor, R.C.A.F., arrived to take over command of the Goose Bay Airport from Group Captain Evans, the whole project nearly went up in smoke.

A strong north-westerly wind was blowing when a fire in the garbage dump located on the outskirts of the American part of the project in the north-western section of the airport got out of control.

The fire spread rapidly through the dry caribou moss and tongues of crimson and yellow flame licked the boughs off the evergreen trees at a speed that seemed almost incredible.

The general alarm was given. What a battle raged! Six thousand men rushed from one danger point to another in trucks. The wireless station was threatened and saved. Next a huge gasoline dump was threatened. Hundreds of men with axes felled the trees nearest the dump while hundreds of others shovelled away the moss and fought to clear an area wide enough to prevent the forest fire igniting the gasoline.

The fire seemed to come forward by leaps and bounds. It appeared certain that the men's mightiest efforts would be useless. Then Bill Durrell came on the scene. The moment the alarm had been given Bill sized up the situation and immediately ordered all his bulldozers equipped with their huge clearing blades. Bill told me

afterwards that never in the whole of his previous experience had men stripped off the gear they were using and rigged on the clearing blades so quickly. If I remember rightly the bulldozers arrived at the scene of the fire within forty-five minutes of the alarm having been sounded, *and to get there they had to travel more than five miles.*

Bill Durrell and the Officers Commanding had driven over the threatened section and made a complete survey of the situation before the bulldozers arrived. All agreed that the situation was very serious. Owing to the direction of the wind and the location in which the fire originated it threatened to sweep across several of the larger fuel and ammunition dumps into the American section of the base and then pass on to one of the Army sections. If even one dump caught fire, God alone could tell what further damage might be done when exploding drums added super-heated high-octane gasoline to the flames.

The plan was to try and turn the fire. No effort could hope to stop or put it out. It was burning so fiercely and travelling so rapidly that I saw it jump from one side of the radio range road to the other before a person could say "Jack Robinson". It was one of the most fascinating sights I ever saw. Bill had asked me to drive to the range road and report back to him if the fire jumped it. I was standing at about the spot from which the photo shown on another page was taken. I could hear the roar, and see the billowing smoke of the fire as it approached the road which had been cleared through the thick bush. Suddenly, I saw the flames burst through the trees. Next instant, like a flash, I saw the trees at the other side scorched into flames and the fire rushed on.

I drove back and told Bill Durrell what had happened and as I spoke I saw the bulldozers come into action line abreast like tanks. They pushed down the trees that

stood between the fire and the gasoline dump. Hundreds of men beat out the fire as it tried to creep through the thick moss. The bulldozers manoeuvred and reformed like men on parade. The drivers stuck to the job and remained in their seats until the paint blistered and in one instance the upholstery caught fire and the man had to jump to safety. They did a wonderful job—a marvellous job.

The moment the fire was turned at one point, trucks rushed the men over to the next most-threatened place. The bulldozers kept right along the edge of the forest fire, turning it time after time. At one time they turned the fire when it was within fifty yards of a huge dump. On another occasion they turned it in the Canadian Army section when the heat and sparks had ignited the roof of a large Army building and it looked as if the whole camp was doomed. Miles of hose and bucket brigades were used to wet down roofs and walls of buildings. The battle raged for eighteen hours and then the men, masked and goggled, heaved a sigh of relief—it started to rain. The extraordinary part of the whole affair is the fact that no buildings were lost, a very few were damaged, and no ammunition or gasoline dump caught fire.

Bill Durrell was like a general in action. It seemed natural to let him handle the mechanical equipment and the construction men who were mostly experienced in fighting northern forest fires. The men of the armed forces and the volunteers from the merchant ships in harbour co-operated in a smooth efficient manner. There was no wasted effort, no confusion. It was a well-won victory. Group Captain Taylor said to Group Captain Evans, "Bert! That was quite a reception to give a fellow!"

CHAPTER 14

Conclusion

LAST but by no means least let us consider the future of Goose Bay, and the vast Arctic Project. The Dominion Government of Canada consider the peacetime value of the various parts of the project to be \$120,000,000. That is the sum the Canadian Government have agreed to reimburse the United States Government for their outlay in building air routes, bases, and other facilities in Canada, built as a wartime measure.

The chain of airfields which constitute the Hudson Bay air route cost the United States \$34,666,100 in U.S. funds. They cost Canada \$1,253,850 in Canadian funds. The Canadian Government have agreed to reimburse the United States to the extent of \$27,460,330, which is the value experts have placed on the permanent construction which can be used for post-war aviation.

The airport in Mingan, Quebec, cost the U.S.A. \$4,285,200. Canada only invested \$36,160 in this venture. The experts consider the value of this base as a post-war proposition, is \$3,627,890. It is on the air route to Europe, via Goose.

On the other hand, Canada spent \$9,950,680 building Goose Bay Airport and the experts claim we should only reimburse the U.S.A. to the extent of \$543,000 for what they expended for increased facilities.

The various projects combined into the Arctic Project cost a total of \$50,754,990. Of this amount Canada spent \$11,240,690. Under the arbitration scheme Canada will pay the U.S.A. \$31,631,310, for what are considered as permanent assets.

The North Western Staging Route, as it is called, covers territory in Canada and the U.S.A. The latter spent a total of \$37,320,226. Of this amount \$31,311,196 is considered as permanent assets and Canada will reimburse the U.S.A. for this outlay. Of Canadian funds \$23,520,953 has been spent additionally on air projects in the north-west.

The U.S.A. also spent \$13,869,045 on building flight strips along the Alaskan highway; on the Mackenzie-Athabaska air route, and on the telephone-telegraph-teletype line from Edmonton to the Alaska boundary. This amount will be reimbursed by Canada.

Thus Canada is spending a total of \$120,000,000 to obtain control of the various air projects constructed in north-eastern, and north-western Canada in the past few years as war measures. Until the end of the war the present arrangement for care, maintenance, and operation will not be disturbed.

The arrangement between Canada and Newfoundland was that the Newfoundland Government would grant the Canadian Government a ninety-nine-year lease for the Goose Bay air project.

Thus we see that the causes leading up to the construction of the North Western Staging Route were first discussed in 1940 by the U.S.A. and Canadian Governments. The causes which led to the decision of building the Arctic Project were discussed early in 1941 and search for suitable locations was started in June that year.

What set of circumstances can justify the expenditure of \$120,000,000 of the public's money by the Dominion

of Canada with which to reimburse the U.S.A. for the permanent facilities built into these huge air projects as a wartime measure? *The sum of \$120,000,000 is based on the value these facilities will be to the people of Canada for commercial aviation after the war has been won.*

All a person need do to learn the answer is to study the globe. The answer is *not* apparent to one who studies a Mercator's projection of the globe. If we take the globe we will see that a line drawn right around the world from Goose Bay Airport cuts through Great Britain, just touches the lower part of Denmark and the northern part of Germany, passes through Poland and Lithuania, enters Russia and passes close to Moscow, Smolensk, and other famous Soviet cities. That line is called the 55th meridian of latitude. It is the Great Circle route, or in other words, it is to all practical intents and purposes the shortest distance by air between these points.

If we start at Goose Bay and trace our finger over the North Pole we find ourselves in China. The North-West Aerial Stage Route already constructed takes us to Siberia, Japan, and the Far Eastern countries. In other words, Canada is so placed geographically that she is in a key position in relation to world aviation after the war has been won. Goose Bay is in the same relation to aviation as Crewe is to railway transportation in England.

Canada has a great future ahead of her, if those who guide the destiny of her people only use foresight and imagination. If Canadians are going to benefit from their marvellous geo-political position, her leaders—or planners—must think two hundred years ahead. That has been the trouble with the democracies in the past. We have been content to drift along and muddle through. That state of affairs cannot be tolerated any longer. If it continues we stand to lose our heritage.

Let me be more explicit. Germany's Junker Military leaders, her chemists, her scientists, and her professors have been planning the future two hundred years ahead. They have been planning and revising the original Karl Ritter plan of 1837 and enlarging that plan in accordance with the development of applied science and experience learned in modern warfare. If we wish to survive we must plan also, but we must plan to establish and bring about permanent prosperity amongst all peoples, of all nations, in order that peace may take the place of war.

Britain developed the tank. We used it to defeat the Germans in the last war and then we rested on our laurels. Germany improved upon the military weapon that had caused her defeat and used it to over-run Europe at the beginning of the present war. That we are still on our feet as a nation and not lying with toes turned up, is due more to good luck than good management.

Britain first invented and constructed a submarine. Fulton and Holland improved and ultimately perfected the underseas boat when science had advanced sufficiently to give us the electric motor and electric battery. Germany planned to use this Anglo-American invention to destroy us. They tried to starve the people of Britain into submission in the first World War, and having failed they tried again within twenty years.

The Wright Brothers flew the first plane. Britain has been using robot planes for battle practice for years, but Germany improved on these inventions and used robot-rocket-planes in an attempt to complete the destruction of London which her ordinary bombers couldn't accomplish in 1940.

Why do these things happen? The answer is simple. It is because we don't use our imagination anywhere except in the comic strips.

After the last war I warned against the danger we would ultimately have to face from submarines. I warned that planes would reduce the potency of a battleship to that of an old man on crutches unless they were provided with adequate surface and aerial escorts. I predicted the loss of any battleships Britain might send to the Far East unless they were strongly protected by both anti-submarine craft and fighter planes.

Once again I predict that unless we visualize the world as it will be two hundred years from now, and unless we keep planning two hundred years ahead of time, we will cease to be a nation.

The robot bomb of today can fly several hundred miles at approximately 400 miles an hour. It is accurate enough to hit within an area of one square mile. The robot bombs of tomorrow will fly several thousand miles at the speed of a modern bullet and they will be able to hit any predetermined target with reasonable accuracy. By reasonable accuracy I mean with the same degree of accuracy which modern artillery shoots today.

Modern science and invention must be directed to constructive purposes, otherwise we are going to destroy the world by our own knowledge put to misuse.

One night on the bridge of a ship I thought of the origin of man. Pride caused some angels to believe they had become as great as Almighty God. There was a Heavenly revolution. The leaders were cast into exterior darkness for all eternity. Those less culpable were placed on this earth to work out their own salvation. There may be something in the theory of re-incarnation, I thought. We have our own free will. We have the right to choose between good and evil. We have the opportunity to work for the honour and glory of God or for our own honour and glory. We have the choice of working for the welfare of our fellow-man, and thus earning eternal reward, or

we can work for selfish material motives and the accumulation of earthly wealth. We can use the gifts and the knowledge that God has given us for constructive purposes and bring happiness to all mankind, or we can direct scientific invention and chemical research along improper channels which will bring an ever-increasing burden of punishment and disaster into our lives, with the ultimate destruction of the human race.

It is my opinion that we must decide and decide quickly. There can be no half-measures. Every human being must line up solidly one side or the other. We must be prepared to work and fight if necessary against all things evil—or we must go to the devil wholeheartedly.

Force appears necessary and must be used to suppress evil irrespective of whether the evil is individual, collective, provincial, federal, or international.

If we make it impossible for Germany and her Axis partners to re-arm, then we must also enter into some arrangement under which representatives of all the other nations can have free access to the armament works, the research laboratories, and the scientific experimental institutions of all other countries.

We must put an end to secrecy in every department of international affairs. We must abolish back-room politics, we must let the light of day into our lives. With radio, television, and other modern devices there is no logical reason why there should continue to be misunderstanding amongst the people of the world, providing these modern inventions are used to educate and enlighten mankind.

The little cockney coster-monger, the Canadian trapper, the American longshoreman, the French vineyard worker, the Italian chef, the Hindu merchant, the Chinese labourer, the Japanese coolie, left alone are inoffensive

individuals. It is selfishness and greed, pride and arrogance, and aggressive, murderous policies that breed hatred and war.

It is little use proceeding into the post-war era wishfully thinking that there will be no more wars. There has been war on this earth ever since Cain crowned his brother Abel over the head with his club. There will continue to be wars just as long as human nature is what it is. The best we can do is to strive to live in peace but always be prepared for war. We must look upon preparation for war as national insurance for peace. The armed services of the Crown can be used constructively for the perfecting of inventions and experimental work connected with modern science. The personnel can be properly trained and highly disciplined. Every person should be taught to respect the natural and international laws.

In the cradle; in the home; in the churches; in the schools; in the colleges and universities; in business; in the professions; in politics; in the letters and in the arts; in the sciences; in every walk of life we must teach individual and collective discipline. We must teach ourselves self-control, we must convince ourselves of the absolute necessity of living unselfishly rather than selfishly.

It didn't seem to be so very difficult or complicated when I sat on the shores of Alexandra Lake that night last July. I thought, "Most Christians say the Lord's Prayer — how is it we seldom seem to practise what we say?"

That night in the silence of the northern wilderness I repeated the words over slowly, sentence by sentence, in my mind:

Our Father . . . Who art in heaven . . . hallowed be Thy name . . . Thy kingdom come . . . Thy will be done

. . . on earth . . . as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread . . . forgive us our trespasses as we forgive others who trespass against us . . . and lead us not into temptation . . . but deliver us from evil . . . And I looked up at the glories of that silent night and added humbly, For Thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory . . . for ever . . . and ever . . . Amen.

Then I sat and thought over these wonderful words, given to us to use as our direct approach to Almighty God.

"If we really want the Kingdom of God to come upon earth we should undoubtedly work with untiring energy and unswerving determination to bring about that desired end.

"If we really wish to do the Will of God while upon earth then we must be serious about keeping His commandments.

"If we honestly wish to deserve the daily bread we ask God to provide for us, then surely we must work for the honour and glory of God and the welfare of our fellow-man in order to earn it."

And then my mind wandered. What is essential to Peace? The question kept repeating itself in my brain. Suddenly, a definition presented itself: "Harmony and understanding between all peoples combined with universal prosperity, based on the principles of Christian charity and common justice,—these are the essentials for permanent Peace."

I looked back over the two thousand years of human history. I saw that because of lack of harmony and because of misunderstanding between the peoples of the world, often deliberately engendered to satisfy some selfish purpose, because there had never been a time when one section of the world had not been trying to exploit the other; because the teachings of Christ had been confined to discussion in the churches rather than

practised in our everyday lives; and because intricate procedure of law had supplanted simple justice—we had suffered one continuous repetition of wars. The wars had been divided by short interludes of peace during which one or more nations were preparing for the next war. I also recalled that each succeeding war was more terrible than the preceding war. I recalled that while wars at one time were fought by professional warriors and confined to specified territories, today they visited death and destruction upon men, women, and children, and devastated whole continents. It also appeared to me that wars usually brought temporary prosperity to the victors, followed by international depressions which in turn flared up into another war. Therefore it would appear that a permanently established universal prosperity is essential to permanent peace.

Then my thoughts went back to the concluding sentences of the Lord's Prayer. "Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those that trespass against us." This is a very important sentence and a still more important request. We must always forgive those who trespass against us, *after they have been tried, convicted, and punished*. To harbour hatred after justice has been done or to continue persecution after punishment has been inflicted in accordance with the law, is what is not permissible. But, in order to ensure peace in our time we must be quick to apprehend and punish any individual, group, or nation, guilty of purely selfish or aggressive conduct towards the rest of mankind.

"And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil." How much do most individuals need the protection of Almighty God! We are so apt to get swell-headed from success; we are so apt to use wealth to usurp power; we are so apt to let authority develop into despotism; we

are so apt to believe that knowledge is due to our own efforts rather than a gift from God.

How many poor men have risen to power and then betrayed those who put them in power and prostituted their own ideals? How many politicians have entered public life with the intention of improving the lot of their fellow-men, and then forgotten their good intentions in order to secure special favours for a select few? It is commonly called party patronage.

Does not the experience of our everyday lives prove the old adage, "Put a beggar on horse-back and he will ride to hell" and the other one, "The road to hell is paved with good intentions"?

Pacifism has no place in this world of ours. Even the Holy Gospel, according to St. Luke, reminds us "*When a strong man armed keepeth his court, those things which he possesseth are in peace; but, if a stronger than he come upon him, he will take away all his armour wherein he trusted, and will distribute his spoils*". What could be clearer both from a spiritual and temporal point of view? St. Luke continues: "*He who is not with Me is against Me.*" This should prove that we must at all times be ready, adequately prepared, and fully awake in order to ward off evil in any form in which it may appear.

To be at war is the natural condition of people upon this earth. History from the beginning of time proves this statement to be a fact. Times of peace have been only happy interludes between wars. Strange though it may seem, history also proves *that the road to the hell of war, has always been paved with good intentions*. The good intentions with which Democracy paved the way into this most recent war were the policies of pacifism, disarmament, and appeasement.

Hatred of war is a natural and commendable virtue, but history also proves repeatedly that one man who is

bloody-minded can turn the thoughts and efforts of a nation from peace to a war of aggression in a decade of time. The Democracies are predominantly Christian in belief. Hundreds of millions base their beliefs upon the teachings of the Gospels. Then why don't they believe what the Gospels teach and heed the warnings that are given therein?

We have been warned that there shall be wars and rumours of wars. We have also been warned against the day "When there shall arise false Christs (Saviours) and false prophets and they shall show great signs and wonders insomuch as to deceive (if possible) the elect."

When before in the history of the world did we have more wars and rumours of war, and more false Christs and false prophets than the world has known during the past fifty years?

What are Hitler and Mussolini but false Christs and false prophets? The word Christ means Saviour; did they not both rise to power by offering themselves as the Saviours of Germany and Italy? Did they not both use lies and deceits that convinced a sufficient majority of their countrymen so that they were elected to supreme command of the destinies of their countries?

But as nothing good can come out of evil, the whole world has been subjected once again to the horrors and tribulations of war. It is safe to say that none of the anti-Christian doctrines would ever have flowed over from the boundaries of the countries in which they were conceived, and grown until they involved the British Empire and the United States in two wars within twenty-five years, if we had been prepared and sufficiently determined to stamp out the movements at the very beginning.

The policy of isolationism is wrong. It is natural for a people to wish to live in peace and mind their own business but in this world it is not practical. Com-

munism; Fascism; Naziism; and the doctrines taught the Sons of Heaven; all these demand that their leaders control the destinies of mankind. This being so, then how can the rest of mankind hope to withdraw into their own shell and survive?

The fact that Germany lost the last war in theory did not prevent the German Junkers aided by Hitler from organizing another war in twenty years. The fact that the Axis Powers may be defeated in this war does not mean to say that another war even more terrible in its intensity and wider in its scope, cannot be prepared within another twenty years. Unless we are going to condemn our children, and our children's children, to a continuous succession of wars, we must be prepared to stamp out, or at least confine within reasonable boundaries, those people who advocate doctrines and form governments which are in opposition to our own. In other words, if we want peace we must make it clearly known that we will stand for no outside interference with our domestic problems.

The policy of Communism and Naziism is to worm their way into the life of another country by infiltration methods. The agents who successfully worm their way into another country then plant the cells which develop and grow into active supporters of the foreign creed. Taking advantage of the fact that they are natural-born or naturalized citizens of the country in which they are active, they fall back on the Four Freedoms to protect them against the treatment they so richly deserve.

The Junkers in Germany built up their most recent Juggernaut with money they borrowed from their victors after the war of 1914-18. People shudder with horror when they read how devotees of the original Juggernaut, Krishna, God of the Hindus, cast victims under the wheels of the ceremonial cart to be crushed to death in order to

appease the wrath of their pagan god. Are the Nazis, the Fascists, or the Sons of Heaven any less pagan? How can we begin to compare the sufferings of the few miserable Hindus with the millions of lives that have been sacrificed within the past few years to satisfy the vanity, and appease the anger of our modern Juggernauts?

Hatred of war and a sincere desire for peace is a natural and a commendable virtue, but in order to ensure peace, even within the boundaries of our own countries, we must recognize aggression as a crime. We must be prepared to punish quickly and severely any and all individuals and groups who advocate imposing their ideas upon others by the use of force. Not only must we punish those who advocate the use of force to impose their will upon the rest of the people, but we must also be prepared to punish all those individuals, groups, corporations, and combines who attempt to exploit the majority of the people by the unethical use of wealth, or the power that wealth has placed in their hands.

Having put our own house in order, and having determined that all loyal citizens will live up to the ideals of democracy, the youth of the nation must be prepared to give service in return for future security. As far as international politics are concerned, it has been proved to our sorrow that holding international conventions, signing treaties, and entering into agreements means nothing unless a military force of sufficient strength is available to enforce the keeping of the agreements, and to punish quickly and without mercy any nation which is proven guilty, before an international court, of secretly plotting or planning to break the agreements into which they have entered.

In the international field of politics we must be prepared to recognize aggression as an international crime aimed at disturbing the peace of the world, and we must

be ready and able to stamp out of existence those people, or if necessary the nation, which would break their promises and agreements solemnly given.

We must demand honesty in human relations or we will continue to have chaos and unlimited suffering which will ultimately lead to the destruction of the human race. You cannot play with fire without burning your fingers; you cannot play with the Devil without becoming contaminated; you cannot deal honestly with crooks without being bested sooner or later. Why try?

All agreements, international and domestic, must be lived up to in the spirit of the agreements as well as in accordance with the letter of the law. Modern diplomacy became so involved with red tape and subterfuge that it became a farce. Most international agreements were so drawn up and worded that they contained enough loop-holes for one to find a dozen legal reasons as to why they shouldn't be lived up to once they became bothersome to one or other of the signatories. This state of affairs developed in recent years until finally unscrupulous individuals, representing their nations at international conventions, and such assemblies as the League of Nations, would sign anything placed before them. They worked on the theory that they could take advantage of all others who were honest in their intentions. Diplomatic relations became farcical, hypocritical, and honest endeavour was killed by unscrupulous chicanery.

First let us examine the chicanery which went on at the Naval Conference in London in 1930. Ramsay MacDonald, Prime Minister of Great Britain, proposed with all the great eloquence at his command that all Nations agree to abolish submarines as a weapon of modern warfare. He referred to them as death-traps in time of peace and unsporting abominations in time of war. Obviously the representative of the Axis Powers

could not agree to the absolute abolition of submarines because if they did the very fact of retaining what they had, or building others, would have been an open breach of good faith. But when the next proposal was put forward, i.e., that the delegates of all nations agree that submarines used in time of war be restricted from sinking merchant vessels without first taking precautions which would ensure the safety of the passengers and crew, all delegates signed with the exception of Spain.

What happened? While the conference was being held in London, February to May, 1930, naval representatives of both Germany and Italy were negotiating with General Franco of Spain to use their submarines on his behalf because they wanted to try out their most modern U-boats and train the crews under conditions of actual warfare. One has only to refer back to the newspapers of that date to read how merchant ships were sunk without warning by unidentified submarines in waters adjacent to Spain. The world knew that German and Italian submarines were operating in Spanish waters, but as Spain had not signed the agreement referred to above, no action could be taken.

When naval observers pointed out to the British delegates that the agreement as signed was impractical of observance in time of war, their arguments were ignored. One naval observer asked a British diplomat, "How could a submarine commander be expected to delay his attack long enough to warn a merchant vessel and give her crew time to abandon ship, when such delay made him vulnerable to attack from fast-flying planes, and from surface vessels fitted with anti-submarine devices such as Asdic Gear, etc?"

The British diplomat could not answer the question, but he made this reply: "Some people are always trying to find fault, create distrust, and intensify suspicions that

already exist. I for one believe in the sincerity of the delegates attending this conference. I have not as yet lost faith in human nature. The fact that they signed the agreement, to my mind signifies their willingness to cooperate and study any ideas that may help towards the preservation of peace."

Mr. Chamberlain held the same views when he returned from his momentous meeting with Hitler in Munich in 1939. Is it possible that people can ever forget the picture of honest, gentlemanly Mr. Chamberlain, stepping from his plane as he returned to England from Germany? Under one arm he grasped his famous umbrella. In his other hand he waved aloft, to the waiting officials, the agreement Hitler had signed guaranteeing the peace of Europe for many years. Hitler was simply taking advantage of Mr. Chamberlain's honesty of purpose, and his faith in human decency, to play for time. When Hitler signed the Munich agreement he was planning to starve 47,000,000 Britishers to death. Immediately war was declared German U-boats torpedoed the S.S. *Athenia*. She was sunk without warning, during a storm, in the dead of night. Do the terrified cries of the hundred odd women and children who lost their lives mean nothing to us?

What value did Italy set upon her agreements and the non-aggression pacts she signed with other members of the League of Nations, when she attacked Ethiopia?

What value did the military leaders in Japan place on the treaties their country had with Great Britain? They tore up agreements and broke the friendship of years in order to become one of the Axis Powers.

What value did the Japanese diplomats place upon their words of assurance they gave American statesmen regarding their country's desire for peace, when their

planes were actually winging their way towards Pearl Harbor?

The world cannot continue on in this way forever. The rule of the bully, the ethics of the rogue, and the chicanery of the devil have pushed aside honesty, integrity, and charitable understanding at international conferences. The only argument an outlaw understands is *force*. The only thing a bully fears is *physical punishment*. The only way to deal with the chicanery of the devil is to crush the devil.

The measure in which the world will enjoy peace after this war is over will depend entirely upon the degree of determination with which we formulate our policy, and the numbers and strength of the military forces we retain in order to enforce the terms of the agreements entered into at the Peace Conference. Laws mean nothing unless those who legislate have the means to enforce them.

The British Empire and the United States have shown their desire to live in peace during the past fifty years. They inclined so much towards pacifism that they have been forced into two wars to fight for their very existence. Logically they should be the two powers who should join together to ensure international law and order and peace after this war is over.

Why not include Russia?

We must include Russia, but we should never permit our enthusiasm to befog our reason. Russia was preparing for war long before 1939. During the twenty years after we finished fighting the Russian Bolshevists in 1920, they were working within every democracy to undermine our constitution and foment revolution. The only possible objective they could have had was to pick up the oddments out from the ruins and establish Soviet government.

We must also remember that Russia did not go to the aid of France when she was attacked, as Britain went to the aid of Poland, yet she was bound by an agreement to do so. We must remember also that Russia did not rush to the aid of the democracies when they were in danger of extinction in 1940-41. It was the democracies that went to the aid of Russia when she was attacked by Germany in the summer of 1941.

We must not permit sloppy sentiment to befuddle our judgment. Russia was prepared in 1941, otherwise she couldn't have resisted the German onslaught, which was beyond anything experienced in military history up to that time.

To ensure peace in the post-war era, we must be prepared to *police the world*. We must patrol the seas, and we must patrol the air. We must have military police in all aggressor nations and in the countries on which the aggressor nations imposed their will after conquest during this war.

The men who do these duties must be carefully chosen. They must be ambassadors of good will as well as minions of the law. They must be strict administrators and quick to punish infringements and crime, but they must also know how to temper justice with mercy. They must be the type that will take advantage of their opportunity to study the language, the problems, and the social and economic conditions, of the people they meet in order that a better understanding may grow up between the peoples of all nations. They must be gentlemen in their conduct, behaviour, and deportment in order to set an example to the people with whom they come in contact. They must be able to inspire confidence and respect. They must be gifted with the qualities of leadership.

* * * * *

It is when up in the Arctic alone with one's thoughts, or on the bridge of a ship in the middle watch, when you seem so detached from the world—or in the depths of the sea, hovering between life and sudden death in a submarine, or when flying above the clouds nearer to God—that one can realize how very puny and insignificant he is as an individual. It is then that one can realize how limited is our reason and how small our greatest endeavours. It is as the result of living in isolated places, serving both under and on the sea, and having flown in the air, that I have found time and opportunity for thought and meditation, and I am convinced that no matter what man himself may try to do, the solution to our earthly problems will still evade us until we join hands with Almighty God and take him back into partnership with us.

Our rulers, generals, and political leaders invariably call upon the public to turn to God and pray in times of adversity. What happens when the danger is past?

At no phase of the meditations or conferences held prior to the treaty of Versailles being signed was the Blessing or Guidance of Almighty God invoked. At none of the treaty meetings were the leaders of Christianity invited to be present or express their views. I would like to conclude this book with the words spoken by our present King, George VI, Christmas Day, 1939.

"I said to the man who stood at the Gate of the Year, 'Give me a light that I may tread safely into the unknown.' And he replied, 'Go out into the darkness, and put your hand into the Hand of God. That shall be better to you than light, and safer than a known way.'"

APPENDIX

In order to give the reader an idea of the tremendous size of the Goose Bay air project, the following partial list of equipment used is given. It must be remembered that all this machinery had to be transported either by ship or plane.

Forty-two Caterpillar D2 to D8 tractors, 12 Caterpillar winches, 5 Caterpillar graders, and a number of Caterpillar auto patrols and snow ploughs; 2 Sicard snow blowers; 9 LeTourneau 12 to 18 cu. yd. carry-all scrapers; 11 LeTourneau D8 and D7 bulldozers; 1 LeTourneau 8-ton rooter and 11 LeTourneau power control units; 4 Jaeger concrete finishing machines and 2 Jaeger concrete spreaders; 13 Thew-Lorain $\frac{1}{2}$ and $\frac{1}{4}$ cu. yd. Power shovels; 8 Canadian Ingersoll-Rand air compressors; 3 Pioneer jaw crushers and 1 Pioneer portable crushing-screening plant; 3 Bucyrus-Erie 10B shovels and 1 Bucyrus-Armstrong well drilling outfit; 2 Koehring 34-E pavers and 1 Koehring 14-E paver and 2 Koehring longitudinal floats; 1 Barber-Greene 6-ft. trencher; Goodyear conveyor belt-ing; London building mixers, 9 Owen draglines and 6 Owen clam-shell buckets; Adams patrols and leaning-wheel graders; Mall concrete vibrators; Gorman-Rupp, C.H. & E. and Novo contractors' pumps; Smart-Turner centrifugal pumps; Canadian General Electric generators and electrical equipment of all kinds, including wire and cable, transformers, call systems, switches,

switchboards, conduit, panel boards, etc.; Canadian Industries Ltd. explosives and salt; Dominion Bridge Co. structural steel; Brunner Mond calcium chloride; Burlington, Truscon and Peck reinforcing steel; 1 International TD-6 tractor and 6 International Farmall tractors; Imperial, British-American and McColl Frontenac lubricants; Northern Electric wire and cable; Greening, Dominion Wire Rope Co. and Canada Wire & Cable wire rope; 6 Galion and Buffalo-Springfield road rollers; 2 Cedar Rapids jaw crushers and 1 Cedar Rapids portable crushing-screening plant; Jeffrey portable conveyors; Whiteman floor finishers; scores of diesel and gas power units, including Allis-Chalmers, Caterpillar, LeRoi, Ford, Wisconsin, Buda and Climax; Johnson bins and batching equipment; 40 Kingham trailers, carrying loads up to 10 cu. yards; 5 Fordson tractors and 93 Fords $2\frac{1}{2}$ to 5 ton trucks, most of them with Galion hoists and dump bodies, and a large number with stake bodies; 2 Diamond-T 10 wheel trucks; 8 Lincoln welders; 1 Hobart welder; 1 LaPlant-Choat brush rake and 1 LaPlant-Choat power control unit; 3 Willamette-Hyster log sulkies; 2

Cleveland form graders; Worthington air spades; 1 Morley swing hammer crusher; a large number of boilers of many different makes; 4 Bros. multiple-wheel rollers; 1 La Crosse 18 ton trailer, 6 pole trailers (20 ft.); 1 Fargo motor truck; 20,000 feet of Blaw-Knox steel paving forms; Atlas Polar diesel electric lighting units; 1 Muskoka Foundry sawmill and 2 other sawmills; 1 Yates planer; Hercules engines; Canadian Fairbanks-Morse power units; Dominion Engineering Co. diesel engines; General Supply Co. of Canada switchboards; and a large array of other equipment of all kinds, including many items loaned by the United States Army, such as F.W.D. trucks, army trucks, tractors, etc. Among the firms who had subcontracts from the McNamara Construction Co. Ltd. were Standard Electric Co. Ltd., Toronto, for the wiring and electric distribution systems; and Reg. H. Steen Ltd., Toronto, for the plumbing and heating.

The sawmills have produced six million board feet of lumber on the job from native timber. In addition, seven million board feet of lumber was shipped in.

An interesting fact that indicates the magnitude of the job is that the contractor's total requirements for gasoline and oil have amounted to 1,143,000 gallons by December 1942.

George McNamara, president of the McNamara Construction Co. Ltd., in commenting with justifiable pride on the record made on this important war project, expressed his appreciation of the good work and untiring efforts of William H. Durrell, the general superintendent on the job; H. J. Clark, assistant superintendent; their staff, and all of the company's men who took part in the work. These men fully realized that they were on important war work and put their full effort into completing it in record time.

The success of the undertaking, however, says Mr. McNamara, was made possible only by the complete co-operation of the engineers of the Department of Transport, including F. C. Jewett, superintending engineer; A. B. Holand, assistant superintending engineer; A. S. Donald, district airways engineer; and F. T. Brown, resident engineer. These engineers worked in perfect harmony with the contractor's staff at all times.

S. J. Bird, vice-president of the McNamara Construction Co. Ltd., gave considerable general supervision to the project, making many aeroplane trips to the site, especially during the absence of Mr. Durrell, when he met with a serious aeroplane accident, from which he is now recovered.

